

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Second Sunday of Advent
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10

Advent begins with darkness. In the days of the prophets, the Israelites looked to God for hope and promise. The prophets began to speak of the hope and light that would be coming to the people of God. Today we continue to share the stories of the prophets to remind us that we have been given this hope and light through the birth of Jesus Christ. During this time in the calendar year our days are getting shorter, and we wait for the light of Christ to shatter this darkness. In Advent we are encouraged to stop and listen and hear what the prophets are saying.

Theme: A branch will grow

Supplies Needed: Cloth for prayer space, advent wreath, Anglican prayer beads (if made by the older group during week 1), matches for the candles or batteries if candles are electric. Pictures (can be downloaded from Google images of the following animals – wolf, lamb, leopard, goat, calf, lion, a child, cow, bear and ox. In addition, have a large branch (real or fake) able to stand with a pot. This can be accomplished simply by using greenery foam inside of a flower pot and a branch. For option 1 a variety of craft supplies to make Jesse Tree Ornaments. Have an outline of a tree printed on paper, one for each student.

Prepare: Prepare your prayer/gathering space with a small table, or space with a piece of cloth, it could be burlap, purple or sarum blue depending on your traditions. On this cloth put a small Advent wreath. The wreath can be something you have prepared together as a group or 4 small votive candles with greenery.

Welcoming the children: Gather the children together at the prayer table and ask some wondering questions –

- What do you think of when you hear the word peace?
- We are now in the season of waiting and listening, the season of Advent.
- What is one thing that you have to wait for?

Opening Prayer: Light the first and second candle on your Advent wreath. Have the children each pick a strand of prayer beads. They will stay in our prayer space for us to use each week during Advent.

- At the cross – say, “Let us pray.”
- For the Invitational beads – say, “Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”
- For the first Cruciform bead – have the children say out loud or in their hearts something they have to wait for.
- For the first seven beads – repeat the line “Help us to wait, Lord.”
- When you reach the second Cruciform bead – have the children say out loud or in their hearts something they want help for.
- For the second seven beads – repeat the line “Guide us, Lord.”

- When you reach the third Cruciform bead – have the children say out loud or in their hearts something they want to pray for.
- For the third seven beads – repeat the line “Be with us, Lord.”
- When you reach the fourth Cruciform bead – have the children say out loud or in their hearts something they have to wait for.
- For the fourth seven beads – repeat the line “Help us to wait, Lord.”
- When you reach the first Cruciform bead again – have the children say the Lord’s Prayer together, ending with Amen.

After the gathering/opening prayer time, you can move to another space in the room for storytelling. It allows the children to move and stretch and renew their focus on the story.

Gather together for your story.

The Story: In the Bible we hear stories from special people called prophets, they said things to many people for God. One of the prophets was Isaiah, he wanted people to know more about God, and begin to tell people about what would happen.

Ask one or more children to read the passage – Isaiah 11:1-10 aloud. The version listed is New Revised Standard. You should use a translation of the bible that is used within your own parish. With older children they can take turns looking up the verses and reading them aloud.

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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Questions: When the children have read this aloud, ask the wondering questions:

- Do these animals naturally live in harmony?
- I wonder why God wanted all of the animals to live in peace?
- I wonder what God wanted us know about peace?

When Isaiah continued by talking about the root of Jesse

- I wonder who the branch of Jesse could be?

Activities

These options can be done within your same space or a separate craft area. Encourage movement after the storytelling.

Option 1: Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree is decorated with ornaments that represent the stories of the Old Testament. This tree can be placed near your prayer table and stay throughout the Advent season.

As a class think of various favorite Old Testament stories and what symbol you might draw or create for the Jesse Tree.

Then create ornaments using various craft supplies – these can be as simple or as elaborate as your group chooses.

Online Resources for Jesse Trees

PDF version of Jesse Tree ornaments http://www.eriercd.org/pdf/jesstree_4up.pdf

History and information <http://www.crivoice.org/jesse.html>

When they are finished you can continue with option 2 and/or or conclude with the final gathering.

Option 2: Growing in Faith

Begin by asking the question - What does it mean when someone says they are 'growing in faith'? Using the picture of the tree, have the children write or draw those who are important to their own growth as a person of faith. Encourage the children to draw or write depending on their comfort level.

Gather/Ending: Gather the children together in a circle in your prayer area.

Optional: sing use Hymn #490 from The Hymnal 1982 – *I want to walk as a child of the light*.

Gather the children together in a circle. If you would like sing, use the song ‘He’s got the whole world in his hands’. You can use the various animals from the Bible passage ex. ‘He’s got the wolf and the lamb in his hands’ for the verses.

If time allows the children can share their pictures. Place the lighted wreath in the middle of your circle. Turn off the lights of the room. Ask the children if there is anything or any prayer they would like to say to the light.

Closing Prayer: God of Love, as we wait for you coming, help us to live in the light. Amen.

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Printed by the Office for Formation and Vocation Ministries of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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