

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Third Sunday after Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Matthew 4:12-23

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
(Book of Common Prayer, page 378)

Accept the light we have received and shine it forth! It is not about shining the light in other's faces, blinding them, but holding the light in open hands.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. And what does Jesus say? The kingdom of heaven has come near. What is this kingdom of heaven and how do we get ready to receive it?

Theme: A Light has Dawned

Before: You may need paper and crayons.

Beginning: Teach the children one more verse of the song, using the candles if they are handy.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
Hide it under a basket (shielding the light with their hands as they sing) NO! (removing hands)
I'm gonna let it shine. Let it shine, Let it shine.

Praying: Thank you, God, for sending Jesus to us. Be with us today as we hear your story.
Amen.

The Story: After Jesus was baptized by John he decided he should go back to his hometown and think about what he was going to do. He spent a lot of time praying to God. Hmm, said Jesus. I think people are ready for me to tell them that God is right here with us. God wants us to know that God loves all of us. But, thought Jesus, if I am going to go tell this to people, I am going to need some help. I am going to have to find some people who will go with me and do the work along with me. So he went for a walk down by the sea where there were lots of people fishing. He saw Peter and Andrew and said to them: "Follow me and I will show you how to fish for people." Right then and there they said: "Yes! We want to follow you!" So the three of them went on down the beach where they saw James and John. James and John were also fishermen and good friends of Peter and Andrew. Jesus called James and John and they decided right then to go with this Jesus and help him. Now Jesus had four people to help him.

Activity: Tell the children we are going to act out this story and can take turns playing the part of Jesus. (It won't matter how many children you have, Jesus will call each child, by name, to follow him.) Suggest each child find a separate place in the room and pretend to be fishing. The child who is playing the part of Jesus goes to one child and says: "Follow me." Then those two

go to the next child and Jesus says: “Follow me,” continuing until all the children have been called.

Activity: If time permits, give the children paper and crayons and invite them to draw a picture of what it might look like if Jesus came to them and asked them to follow him.

Getting Closure: If the children want to share their drawings, provide the opportunity for them to do so. Then sing the song once more, either using the “candles” the children made or simply holding their index finger up in the air as they sing.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you want each of us to follow Jesus. Be with us as we leave here today and help us to see you. Amen.

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