

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Second Sunday after Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Isaiah 49:1-7

Unit background: What is Epiphany?

The word Epiphany means “appearance” or “manifestation” of Christ to the gentiles. We think of revelation, insight or “shedding light” on who Christ was and is to us.

The feast day of Epiphany is January 6, concluding the Twelve Days of Christmas. We associate it with the arrival of the Wise Men; the Magi who followed the star, the light that led them to the Christ child. The symbol is usually the enlarged star over the manger in Bethlehem.

Theme: The Light of Christ

The theme is about going from darkness into light, a common metaphor the prophets used to speak to God’s people. It is about opposites: light vs. dark; insight vs. ignorance; listening to God vs. not listening; following God vs. waywardness. The easiest way to explain to children is compare and contrast. God’s love is always there to direct us into the light of Christ by giving us guidelines on how to treat each other. This unit includes words of the prophets and the commandments.

Before: You will need various art supplies for the Activity/Response Options today. Look at the options below and choose which one/ones you want the children to do.

Beginning: Open your time together with singing. Choose one to use each session of this unit. It could give structure to sing the same song before the story as a cue to the children it is circle time. Suggested songs:

- This Little Light of Mine
- He’s Got The Whole World in His Hands
- The Hymnal 1982, #490 - I want to walk as child of the light
- Wonder Love and Praise, #787 – We are marching in the light of God

Opening Prayer: Oh God, creator of the universe, we invite you to be present with us today. We ask for your Light to shine on us this morning as we learn more about your love for us. Amen.

The Story: Isaiah 49:1-7

People who lived before Jesus waited a long time for him to be born. While the people waited God began to get them ready to receive the gift of Jesus. God told particular people called prophets what was going to happen. Prophets listened to God in a special way. The prophets reminded the people of God’s love and the great things God had promised to do.

God spoke to Isaiah and told him about what was coming. He used these words:

“And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD and my God has become my strength—he says, ‘It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.’”

Questions:

It sounds like God has a plan for all people know the Lord. God wants all people to know the light of salvation. What do you think that means? (Give the children time to wrestle with this concept.) Who would bring light and salvation to all people? How does that happen today?

Here some more words of Isaiah:

“Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the savior of rulers, ‘Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.’”

- What would it be like to go before a king? How do you approach a king? (Give children time to contribute.)
- What does it mean to bow, kneel and/or prostrate? Do we ever see this gestures in church? Who do you think they are honoring when someone bows in church? What do you think it means to refer to God as King of Kings?
- Why is it special to kneel in church? (Good time to talk about prayer.) When do we kneel in church? When we pray before God is a good time to kneel. When do we see bowing? When the cross goes by or before we go up for Eucharist is a good time to bow. Do we ever prostrate ourselves? No, but a new priest does when s/he takes vows to be God’s special servant. Would you like to try to kneel? To bow? (Stand & bend at waist) To prostrate? (Lay face down on floor) All these are gestures of reverence or honoring God.

Today we have some activities to show us how light and dark are opposites; that God wants us to see the light and know the love God has for us.

Response/Activities with extra supplies needed

Art

Opposites: Make the name of Jesus in black letters on white paper; using different mediums such as paint, markers, cutting letters.

Stamp Making: Make a stamp maker by cutting a star from a sponge; dip in light paint and put on dark paper.

Games

How many steps before the Queen/King – children line up behind a line; person who is “it” allows one child to move at a time by asking, “How many steps before the Queen/King? Queen/King tells them how many steps they may take.” First child to reach the Queen/King is next one.

Mother/Father May I – children line up behind line, person who is “it” turns around and each child asks “Mother may I take ___ little/big steps.”

Drama

Liturgical Gestures – kneel, bow, prostrate

- Liturgical Gestures – kneel, bow, genuflect, and/or prostrate. Have one child demonstrate to the group as end of circle time.
 - Kneel – on both knees
 - Bow – bend from waist
 - Genuflect – kneel on one knee
 - Prostrate – lay face down on floor

Closing Prayer: O God, through your power of love and justice, our wrongs are forgiven every day. Thank you for forgiving us. Amen.

Isaiah 49:1-7

Listen to me, O coastlands,
pay attention, you peoples from far away!
The LORD called me before I was born,
while I was in my mother's womb he named me.

² He made my mouth like a sharp sword,
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow,
in his quiver he hid me away.

³ And he said to me, 'You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'

⁴ But I said, 'I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the LORD,
and my reward with my God.'

⁵ And now the LORD says,
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—

⁶ he says,
'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

⁷ Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,
the slave of rulers,
'Kings shall see and stand up,
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.'

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Epiphany Lesson Plans for Young Children Writer: Linda Nichols

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