

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-9a(9b-12)

Most of the lessons are from Isaiah. Isaiah was an educated man, as was Micah. Isaiah, a member of the nobility, preached justice and love in obedience to God's call. It should be explained to the children that someone who was a “have” thought it was essential that he listen and obey the call of God... to represent his relationship with God through his relationship with others less fortunate. He was to represent God's Light to the world and preach about that Light coming into the world.

A Notation for this Week’s Scripture: Isaiah continues the theme of Justice. The prophet explains to the people that their relationship with each other reveals their true relationship with God. They cannot say that they have a good relationship with when they have no mercy for others. God does not require fasting. God requires justice and mercy.

Theme: The Light of Christ

Before: It is important to read the lesson before you come into the class. You will find the experience of knowing what the text says will help you to be present and focused.

You will need a Bible or copies of the scripture for each child. You will need a flashlight. Using a pie tin, put sand in the tin (this is a safe way to do this) and place a candle for each of the older children in your class.

Beginning: Invite the children to talk about why we put candles in our windows at Christmas. What other times do we use the light of candles and what does it mean? (Lighting the Advent Wreath, giving a candle to a newly baptized baby/person, candles on the altar, etc.).

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, help me to keep my mind and heart open and listen to hear what you want me to learn this morning. Amen.

The Story: Isaiah 58:1-9a(9b-12) Invite four children to read verses 1-2, 3-5, 6-9a, 9b-12.

Questions

- I wonder what this passage is saying to us?
- I wonder why fasting is not enough to please God?
- What is the result of acting justly? Give examples.
- Are you ever afraid of the dark? Do you know someone who is afraid of the dark?
- When there is darkness in the world, what does that look like?
- Are you a light in the world? How do you know this?
- Who is a light in the world? Why?

Activities

Darkness and Light

Turn off the light in the classroom (Only if there is more than one adult in the classroom). Using the song “This Little Light of Mine”, including the new verses the children wrote in the First Sunday of Epiphany, have the children pass the flashlight around and ask them to shine the flashlight under their chin as they sing.

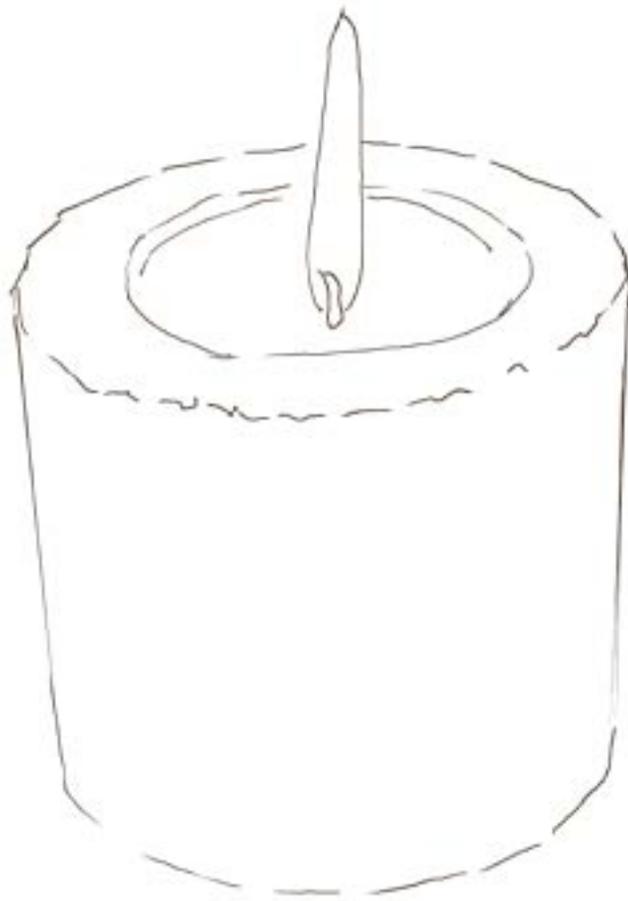
We Bring Light When We...

Some people say that when we stand up for others, when we bring justice into the world, when we do the things that are in our scripture today (share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them,); we bring light into the world. Invite the children to create their own light by using the candle coloring sheet. Invite them to finish the sentence “I bring light into the world when I...” by either drawing or writing how they can bring light and justice into the world.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share what they have thought of and created.

Closing Prayer: Dear God, I promise to shine your love for me and everyone today. Amen.

I bring light into the world when I...



This Week's Reading: Isaiah 58:1-9a(9b-12)

¹ Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. ² Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

³ “Why do we fast, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. ⁴ Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. ⁵ Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed to free, and to break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to and not to hide yourself from your own kin? ⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. ⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

(^{9b} If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, ¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. ¹¹ The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. ¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.)

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