

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

Scripture: Isaiah 49:8-16a

Isaiah is a major prophet (the others are Ezekiel and Jeremiah). Prophets offer warnings, consequences of waywardness, as well as, reminded the people of God’s promises. Isaiah has three sections: chapters 1-39, 40-55, and 56-66. The first calls the people to trust God. The second is about returning to Jerusalem, and the last section encourages life in the Promised Land as faithful to God. Jesus identifies with chapter 61 in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Luke. The Messiah is associated with social justice and looking after the poor, orphans and widows.

A Notation on this Week’s Scripture

From Isaiah we learn that the people and Jerusalem have been restored in their relationship with God and God invites them to rejoice. It is metaphor that God does and will continue keep the “Promise” of restoration. God will always have compassion on all people who suffer. God is faithful to all his creation.

Theme: I Will Not Forget You

Before: You will need copies of the Bible or copies of today’s scripture for each child. You will also need paper, crayons, markers, pens, and pencils for the activity.

Beginning: Invite the children to look down at their hands. Are there any defining marks on your hand? Scars? Finger nail polish? Marker?

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for making us each unique and for loving us all so much. Help us to remember your pledge that you will not forget us. Amen.

The Story: Isaiah 49:8-16a Invite each child to read one of the sentences from the scripture today by going around in a circle. If a child does not want to read, simply invite them to say “pass” and it will go to the next person. Before you begin reading, invite the children to mark or write down the words or phrases that stand out for them.

Questions:

- I wonder what words or phrases stood out for you as you heard and read the scripture?
- I wonder what questions you might have about our reading?
- I heard a theme of reconciliation in this reading. Who can tell the story and how that theme is played out in this lesson today?
- I wonder what it looks like/feels like to have compassion for someone?
- I wonder who in our community, in our society needs compassion? Why?
- What do we do to show others compassion? What does it look like?

Activity:**Inscribed (Ourselves)**

God tells us that we will not be forgotten and that we are inscribed on the palms of God's hand. What does inscribed mean? (give them time to respond) God is telling us that we are carved or decorated onto the palms of God's hands. Think about how many times we look down at our hands in a day. Does that mean that God will see us and think of us often? If we are on God's palms, that means that God will see us each day, many times.

With a partner (or you can help the children) trace each others hands and then decorate them to show how God sees you – how you are inscribed.

Inscribed (Others)

Have the children trace hands and then use pictures, words, etc. to picture how God sees all of us. Think about using words that can represent your community, pictures that tells about your congregation, etc. If you have a bulletin board, invite the children to post their hands for others to see.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, I am so glad you live in me. I am grateful to be Child of God and to be able to show compassion for others as you show compassion to us. Amen.

This Week's Reading: Isaiah 49:8-16a

8 Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages;

9 saying to the prisoners, "Come out," to those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves." They shall feed along the ways, on all the bare heights shall be their pasture;

10 they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.

11 And I will turn all my mountains into a road, and my highways shall be raised up.

12 Lo, these shall come from far away, and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Syene.

13 Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the LORD has comforted his people; and will have compassion on his suffering ones.

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me."

15 Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.

16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.

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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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