

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

**Scripture: Acts 2:14a, 22-32**

The Easter season is when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Easter is a very special time of year. There are fifty days in the season. The season has seven Sundays, and this is the second Sunday in Easter. After the season of Lent, the Easter season brings about a lot of happiness as we celebrate Jesus Christ's resurrection. During this time children should be reminded that after Jesus Christ died on the cross he came back to be among the disciples for forty days.

For the Lessons of this Easter season, you will need United Thank Offering boxes to hand out to the children. These are free and you can get them through the following website:

<http://episcopalmarketplace.org/Products/United-Thank-Offering>

**Peace and Justice**

These seven Easter lessons will explore peace and justice issues. Jesus is the role model for Christians and throughout the lessons you will want to compare how the values of the person being highlighted reflect the values we have been taught by Jesus. Easter season is a good time for children to look at what they have in their community, good and bad, and to look beyond their community and to the past to learn about some challenges that the United States and other parts of the world have faced.

You might consider watching the video links that are provided in order to learn more about the person being highlighted each Sunday.

**This Week's Scripture<sup>1</sup>: Acts 2:14a, 22-32**

After his resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with his disciples and then was raised into heaven. In this reading, Peter stands with the other 11 disciples to proclaim that Jesus is an agent of God. Peter and the disciples are at a pilgrimage festival in Jerusalem where people from many parts of the world have come to be together. When Peter speaks to this large crowd, this is seen as the beginning of the church. Peter shares with the crowd that God raised up Jesus Christ as Lord and Messiah. Peter tells the crowd that Jesus' death was according to God's plan. Pentecost is the day we celebrate the beginning of the church. This holy day on our church calendar is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the season of Easter.

**Theme: God Gives us Hope So We Can Help Others**

When God raised Jesus Christ to heaven, he gave hope to many on earth. God continues to give hope to those who are often forgotten, left behind, and abused.

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<sup>1</sup> During Eastertide, a reading from *The Acts of the Apostles* is substituted for the lesson from the Old Testament.

**Before Class:**

Many churches do not have Sunday School on Easter Sunday. If your church is one of these churches, you are welcome to combine some of the Easter Sunday lesson plan with the one for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter. The wonder on Easter Sunday after Lent is often so beautiful and it remains important to share with the children even if not on Easter Sunday.

You will need: Tissue paper, green pipe cleaners, and a stapler. You can find great instructions and pictures with a simple search online for “Mexican tissue paper flower.” You may want to print out a picture or two for the children to get the idea.

You will need UTO Boxes and copies of the UTO information sheet (found in Easter Sunday Lesson). These are free and you can get them through the following website:

<http://episcopalmarketplace.org/Products/United-Thank-Offering>

The children should be encouraged to return them on the last Sunday of the Easter Season.

**Beginning:**

Some children may have attended Easter services for the first time in a while last week and their families decided to return this week. Welcome all the children and make sure they all feel included this morning.

Invite them to gather into a circle and tell them:

During the Easter season, we are doing some special things. Each Sunday, we will hear a story from the Acts of the Apostles, which is the book of the bible that tells the story of the early Church. We will also hear a story about a role model that lived the way Jesus teaches us to live. We will also be looking at how we can serve Jesus’ mission in the world as the Apostles and role models have done.

**Opening Prayer:**

Thank you for this Season of Easter. Help us to remember how special your Son Jesus Christ is to all of us. You have given hope to many by sharing your Son with the world. Thank you for giving us leaders that help us to find hope in this world. Amen.

**The Story\* Acts 2:14a, 22-32:**

When Jesus first met Peter, Peter was working as a fisherman. Peter did not know how to teach or talk to crowds of people. In fact, Peter didn’t always get what Jesus was trying to teach him. But Peter trusted Jesus and had faith in Him. Jesus had faith that Peter could learn and grow. Jesus gave Peter a very important job to do. Jesus told Peter to spread the story of God’s love for the people and to start a church where people who believed in Jesus could worship together. After Jesus was arrested and killed, Peter and the other apostles were afraid that they might get arrested too. So they stayed in an upper room where they had shared their last supper with Jesus. They were waiting for Jesus to keep His promise that He would send His Holy spirit to guide them and show them what to do. Fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead, His

Holy spirit came into the room where the apostles were. The Holy Spirit entered in to the heart and mind of each apostle and made them brave and strong and smart about God’s plan for how to spread the teachings of Jesus. After this happened Peter went outside with the other apostles and

gave a speech to a huge crowd of people that was gathered in the streets of Jerusalem. With great confidence, in a big voice, Peter told the people all about Jesus and all Jesus had done for the people. Peter wanted to make sure the people knew that Jesus was from God and was a part of God. He told them how Jesus rose from the dead. Peter said that even if they had not seen this themselves, that he and all the other apostles were witnesses to this and the people could trust and believe that Peter and the other apostles were giving a true testimony.

\*Adapted from: Pearson, Sharon Ely and Robyn Szoke, editors. *The Prayer Book Guide to Christian Education*. New York: Morehouse Publishers, 2009

### **Questions:**

- I wonder what it was like for Peter and the other apostles to carry on Jesus' teachings?
- I wonder if we might be like Peter and the apostles?
- I wonder how people today still teach and show others the way of Jesus?

### **Exploring a Role Model:**

Each story during the Easter Season will highlight a role model that the children will learn about each week. As you tell the story highlight the values each person displays reminding the children that Jesus is the best role model of all. Today's role model is civil rights leader Cesar Chavez.

Look online for videos of Cesar Chavez's life to show the children.

- Cesar Chavez was a leader in the Chicano (Mexican-American) Movement in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. He grew up working alongside his family as a farm laborer. He knew that farm workers deserved better working conditions. He fought for worker rights and gave many hope.
- Cesar believed that non-violence was important to the United Farm Worker cause. In trying to show how important farm worker rights were to many people he decided to fast for many days. Fasting means that you do not eat or drink anything other than water. Cesar brought lots of attention to farm workers in this way.
- Both Cesar and Peter were responsible Christians and helped give people hope. Both Peter and Cesar gave of themselves in order to continue the work of Jesus Christ. Peter established the church and Cesar established a union for farm workers. They both worked closely with others because they knew that the work would continue after they died.

### **Questions:**

- Tell us about Cesar's life and the values by which he lived.
- How were his values like the one's Jesus taught us to live by?
- Do you think your community has some of these values?
- How should you or your church help others who do not have the same rights that you do?
- How can we reflect Jesus' love in the world?

### **Reflection:**

People need to feel hope in their lives, especially after they have been hurt by someone.

- Think of two people in your life that need to find hope.
- How can you show them how to be hopeful?

- Do you know someone that is filled with hope?
- Sometimes people that are close to us are full of hope, especially for young people. How can we show them that we appreciate their hopeful attitude?

### **Art Activity: Mexican Tissue Paper Flower**

You can find great instructions and pictures with a simple search online.

- Stack 6 sheets of tissue paper on top of one another. They can all be the same color or you can use different colors. The one on top will be the center color.
- Fold 6 tissue paper sheets to look like an accordion with about one inch folds.
- Staple the middle of the accordion looking tissue papers OR Wrap the pipe cleaner around the middle of the tissue paper at the half-way point.
- If you want the end of your flower to have shape, cut each end of the tissue paper to make it rounded or whatever design you would like to shape each petal.
- Hold the strip in the middle with the pipe cleaner ends are pointing down.
- Unfold the stack on both sides of the pipe cleaner, the same way you would open a fan.
- Carefully, begin to “peel” each tissue paper layer up to the middle or the center of the flower.
- Peel one layer at a time.
- Once you have “peeled” all of the tissue paper layers your flower should look like the picture on the Closing Prayer slide.

### **Closing:**

On this Second Sunday of Easter we remain grateful to God for giving people hope. God gives us all hope through his Son Jesus Christ and reminds us that we need to trust in him. Thanks be to God.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Thank you for people who bring hope to many. Help us to feel your presence even under difficult circumstances. May we help others to feel hope so that we will all be closer to you.

*Easter Lesson Plans for Older Children written by Luisa Bonillas, Ph.D.*

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