

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

Scripture: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

The Easter season is when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Easter season is a very special time of year. There are fifty days in the season. The season has seven Sundays, and this is the third Sunday of Easter. The Easter season brings about a lot of happiness as we celebrate the coming of spring and 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.

Peace and Justice

These 7 Easter Season lessons will explore peace and justice issues. Jesus is the role model for Christians. Throughout the lessons you will want to compare how the values of the persons being highlighted reflect the values we have been taught by Jesus. The person highlighted for each lesson will serve as a modern day role model for others in your community. Be sure to share how their actions reflect the values we have learned from Jesus. The 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 into the past to learn about some challenges that the United States and other parts of the world have faced.

Today's role model is First Lady, Michelle Obama. She has followed the tradition of many First Ladies in supporting important work for our country and as mothers. Laura Bush, the previous First Lady continues to be a role model as she focuses on education and health care. She too, has two daughters who spent some growing up years in the White House. Search online for videos in order to learn more about the person being highlighted each Sunday. There are also videos about many First Ladies you might watch.

A Notation on this week's Scripture

In this reading, Peter tells the crowd that they are responsible for the death of Jesus. Peter also tells the crowd that if they repent and are baptized in Jesus' name they will be forgiven. Many of these people believe Peter so they repent and are then baptized in the name of Jesus. This results in the beginning of the church, now known as Pentecost. The season of Pentecost follows the season of Easter. These people followed Jesus Christ and admired Peter because he promised that God would save them if they repented. Establishing the Christian church was not easy and Peter and his followers took many risks by speaking up and telling others about the many great things that God and Jesus Christ had in store for them.

Theme: Promise

Before Class:

You will need poster paper, markers, note cards, pens/pencils, and other materials for the Activity on Promise and hope.

You will need UTO Boxes and copies of the UTO information sheet (found in Easter Sunday Lesson).

Beginning: Invite the children 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 people who give promise to those in need. Please help us to feel your love as we see the Mothers of the World lead many to your promise. Thank you for our mothers' constant love for us. Please bless them on this very special day. Amen.

The Story Acts 2:14a, 36-41:

Before He died, Jesus gave Peter a very important job to do. He told Peter to build his church. Jesus didn't want Peter to get bricks and build a building. Jesus wanted Peter to open people's minds and hearts to follow Jesus, so that His messages of goodness and kindness would grow in the world. On this day Peter was feeling very brave and strong in his faith. God's Holy Spirit had filled Peter and the other apostles with courage and the ability to speak just the right words. Peter went outside and made a speech about Jesus to a very large crowd of people in the streets of Jerusalem. When Peter helped the people to understand that they had crucified God's son, who was a part of God, they were very sad and their hearts were broken. The people cried out to Peter, "We are so sorry. What can we do now?" Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." On that special day three thousand people decided to change the direction of their lives. They decided to follow Jesus. Peter and the other apostles baptized them in the name of Jesus Christ. Some people say that was the day the church was born, because on that day it grew from a small group of believers to over three thousand members. To this day we celebrate the day of Pentecost as the birthday of the church.

Exploring the Role Model:

Each story during the Easter Season will highlight a role model that the children will learn about each week. Today's role model is First Lady Michelle Obama. Each week as you tell the story highlight the values each person displays reminding them that Jesus is the best role model of all.

- Michelle Obama is the First Lady of the United States. That means that her husband, Barack Obama, is the President of the United States. Together they have two daughters, Malia and Sasha. Before they had children, Mrs. Obama went to college and became a lawyer. Although as First Lady she no longer practices law, she encourages children and their families to eat healthy meals and exercise.
- Mrs. Obama is a woman full of promise and she makes every effort to spend lots of time with her two daughters. For the times that she is not home with Malia and Sasha, Michelle has asked her mother to live at the White House with the First Family. Other First Ladies, who were mothers, have also chosen to focus on spending time with their children. Former First Lady Laura Bush, a librarian, initiated a reading program for children, for example.

- Michelle Obama is a role model to her daughters and to many other young people in the world. She has a devoted faith.

Jesus and Peter had many followers. The work First Ladies have done reflect the same values Jesus taught us. Michelle inspires her daughters and others to pursue an education and to make good choices with the opportunities that they have, like she did. Peter inspired many to be baptized helping to establish the church in the name of Jesus Christ. Michelle and Peter have been blessed by God and Jesus Christ to lead others during very different times in history.

Questions:

- I wonder what you remember or think is important about Michelle Obama?
- Do you think your community has some people that grew up in circumstances similar to Michelle Obama?
- How should you or your church help others that are full of promise?
- How can we reflect Jesus' love in the world?

Reflection:

People need to feel full of promise in life.

- Think of two people in your life who need to feel promise.
- How can you show them to be full of promise?
- Do you know someone that is filled with promise?
- Sometimes people that are close to us are full of promise, especially young people.
- How can we support people with great promise?

Activity – Promise and Hope:

Both Peter and Michelle Obama have changed the world and created promise and hope for those around them. Let's think for a minute about how we can create promise and hope. (Invite the children to brainstorm, writing their ideas up on the whiteboard or easel paper.) Now that they have ideas they can: (encourage them to think of actions they can begin in class that day to create promise and hope.)

- Create posters about the promise and hope
- Create a plan for how to begin creating the promise and hope
- Create notes or cards for others encouraging them

Closing Prayer: On this Third Sunday of Easter we remain grateful to God for filling people with promise. God promised us life and love when he sent Jesus Christ to the earth. Thank you, God, for helping us to feel promise. Amen.

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

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