

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

Scripture: Acts 1: 6-14

In the early church Easter was the day for Baptisms. The festival season of Easter marks the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost. It is a time for reflecting on the meaning of our Baptism and the other sacraments. The church calls this process of studying the mysteries of the church mystagogia. We explore what it means to be the Body of Christ and members of His church and how we are to live this out in the world today. During the Easter season the Old Testament readings are replaced with selections from the *Book of Acts*. We hear about the sacrifice and resurrection of our Lord so that we too may know how to proclaim the good news of Jesus with similar joy and conviction.

A Notation on this Week's Scripture:

Since Jesus' resurrection on Easter, he has been with the apostles in a new way as the resurrected Christ. For the past forty days he has been teaching them about the Kingdom and preparing them for their mission. On some level they still don't quite get it. They want to know when He will restore Israel. This is their agenda not God's. Jesus tells them no one can know God's timetable. He instructs them to wait in Jerusalem until He sends His Holy Spirit to them. Only then should they go out to fulfill His mission. When he is done speaking Jesus disappears in a cloud. This is known as The Ascension, Jesus' return to the Father in Heaven. The apostles needed to make the transition from a local Jesus to a heavenly universal Jesus who can be everywhere at once. Although Jesus is no longer among them, His power and love returns to dwell within them in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Theme: God's Time

God's timing is not ours. God sends us the Holy Spirit to strengthen us for the work he wants us to do in the world.

Before Class

You will need a watch, clock, calendar, timer, appointment book, bible, family photo album.

Have props ready, real or pictures of the items. You can still do the activity if you are missing them. Just talk about them.

Beginning

Review the Easter greeting.

Teacher: *Alleluia! The Lord is risen.*

Children: *The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

Opening Prayer: God of all time help us to know when to wait and when to act. May your Holy Spirit guide us. Amen.

The Story

Jesus had been with the apostles for forty days after he rose up from the dead on Easter. He taught them many things about the Kingdom of God. Now it was time for Jesus to return to God in heaven. The apostles still wanted to know one more thing. When was God going to send the Romans out of Israel and give the country back to the people? Jesus told them that no one can know God's plans for exactly when God will do something. God's time is not the same as our time. Jesus told them it was not yet time for them to carry out His mission. They needed to wait in Jerusalem until God sent the Holy Spirit to give them strength and courage for their mission of spreading the Good News.

When Jesus was done talking a great white cloud covered Him up and then He was gone. The apostles were amazed as they stared up at the sky. While they were looking up two angels appeared to them. They said, "*Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.*" No one knows when this will happen, but we trust God will keep his word. The apostles obeyed Jesus. They went back to the upper room in Jerusalem and prayed and waited all together until the day when God would send His Holy Spirit.

A Child Friendly Meditation on Time

Look what I have.

(Show a watch, clock, calendar, timer, an appointment book, a timer, bible, photo album. After each question have the children identify which they would use.)

What do these things have in common? They all tell us about time. I think it's time for us to talk about time. Time is a gift from God so that everything doesn't happen all at once.

- How do you know when it's time to go to school? Some things you don't want to be late for.
- How do you know when it's your birthday or when its vacation time from school.
- What if I don't want to forget when I have to go the doctor?
- How about when I am baking a cake, how will I know when it's done?

These things were all invented by people. God also gave us some ways of telling time. (Talk about the sun and the moon for day and night and the stars for seasons. Hold up the photo album.)

How can this help us tell time? This can tell us about times when we were younger or even about times before we were born. It helps us remember other times. This is a picture of my father (or whomever.) He isn't with me anymore. But he lives in my heart because I remember him and all the times we shared and all the things he taught me.

Allow the children some time to recall someone that may have lost and how they remember them. I wonder how the apostles might have felt when Jesus went away. I wonder how the apostles remembered Jesus?

End with showing the Bible. How does this help us keep time? It teaches us about Gods time and the things He made happen long ago. God made some promises about what else will happen. But we don't know when. We will just have to wait and trust that God will act in His own good time.

A Game about Acting and Waiting

Instructions: I am going to tell you about some different things that happen.

If you think it's time for action to take place, jump up and say "Act."

If you think it's time to wait. Raise your hand like you are saying stop and say, "Wait."

- You get up and it's dark out but you want to go out to play.
- Your Mom just mixed the batter for a cake. You want to eat it right now.
- Your friend fell on the playground and is crying.
- The ground is covered with snow and you want to plant flowers.
- You are playing soccer and the ball comes to you.
- Dad says pick up your toys.
- Mom tells you your cat is going to have kittens. You want to play with them now.
- You want it to be Christmas.
- You want to get married.

(you get the idea. You can make up your own or have the children create some.)

Conclude: The Bible says, "To everything there is season and a time to every purpose under heaven." Some things are up to us and when some other very important things happen is up to God. God's Holy Spirit can help us know when to act and when to wait. Waiting can help us get ready. Give example if time.

Closing

Return to the story circle. Say this closing poem:

Our time together is almost done
I hope you had a bit of fun.
May God's blessings go with you.
Show His love in all you do.
So now on this special day
Let us bow our heads and pray.

Closing Prayer

Dear Risen Lord thank you for the gift of time and the help of you Holy Spirit. Help us to know when to wait and when to act. Amen

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