

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 7
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Matthew 10:24-39

In this season after Pentecost, we hear stories of Jesus ministry in the world and our call to engage in that mission. This season is also known as Ordinary Time coming from the word “ordinal” which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The color for this season is green and it is often referred to as the green growing time as we hear stories of what God is calling us to do in the world, we join in that call, and we grow in our faith.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel and Reading

The reading for today can be a difficult one if we do not look at what lies beneath the word. Jesus tells us that what we instinctively do or don’t do, we should be doing the opposite. Jesus talks about setting family members against one another and turning things upside down. These are challenging words for us because it means that all those relationships, all the things we think are important, all those cultural norms we try so hard to abide by are turned on their head. The central message in all this upendedness is that God comes first before anything else we think might be important AND God knows all of those things in our hearts and minds. The good news is that because God knows all, it means that we do not need to keep anything hidden, we do not need to fear, we do not need to keep secrets. All is known by God and nothing comes before God. Nothing.

Theme: God Knows Us

Before: You will need a jar full of beads or some other small item for the story illustration. For the bracelets, you will need elastic or stretchy chord and any other things that you want them to be able to put onto their bracelets.

Beginning: Invite the children to gather in a circle and put the jar of beads at the center of the circle. Have each child guess how many beads are in the jar and write down the guesses.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, be with us as we explore what your call to us means in our lives. Help us to hear your call and discover how we can live into the mission you have given us. Amen.

The Story: Matthew 10:24-39

In today’s story, Jesus is trying to tell the disciples how important they are to God. He says to them, “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside of God’s care. And even the very hairs on your head are all numbered.” God loves the world that God created so much that God keeps count of even the smallest things because each thing is important. Do you think you can count all the hairs on your head? It would be hard, right? The amazing thing is that God knows how many hairs you have! God cares for us so much that God knows all the little and big things about us. Nothing can be hidden from God and God

loves us just as we are! God's love for us is so great that God knows how many hairs we have on our head and how many sparrows are in the air.

At the beginning of class, you were invited to guess how many beads were in this jar by just looking at them. Some of you were very close and others of you weren't as close. Do you want to know how many there are? There are _____ beads in the jar. As a symbol of God's love, we are now going to create bracelets out of these beads.

Activity: Seven Bead Bracelets

Invite the children to take beads from the jar and make a bracelet to remind them how much God loves them. You will need to measure out lengths of elastic or stretchy chord for bracelets. If you choose, you can have other things there too, like crosses, to put onto the bracelet. Have them string them together and tie it closed to form a bracelet.

Game: Counting

Invite the children to go around the room counting things, making note of what there are "too many" to count – like beads, puzzle pieces, markers, etc.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to put away their supplies and clean up with your help. Gather them in a circle and ask them to share what they created.

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for loving us so much. You know everything about us and care for us so much. Thank you for your love and care. Amen.

Written by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 7
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Matthew 10:24-39

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Theme: God Knows Us

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for each child. If you are going to do the activity, you will need costumes for the drama, mural paper or plain paper, markers, pens, and crayons.

Beginning: Tell them a bit about what this Season after Pentecost means (you can use the description found at the beginning of the lesson if you would like to) and invite them to think about what this green growing time can mean for them.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, we ask you to be with us as we explore what your words mean for our lives. Guide us as we seek to do your mission in the world. Amen.

The Story: Matthew 10:24-39 Invite five of the children to read the scripture for today. You can see below the five sections are broken up this way: vs. 24-25, 26-31, 32-33, 34-36, 37-39.

Questions:

- wonder what it was like for those listening to Jesus’ words for the first time?
- What do you think their response may have been?
- I wonder why these words are difficult to hear?
- I wonder how these words might make us feel liberated?

- I wonder what this kind of world would look like? What would it look like for people to be equal, for us to not be fearful, for things to be out in the open, and for us to put God first?

Activity: Living in a Different World

Drama: Invite the children to act out what this kind of world would look like. (see the last question to spur on ideas.)

Art: Invite them to create a mural of how this world would be different than the world we live in now. What would look different? What would be the same.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share what they created. Invite them to share how they think they might live into this vision today.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us put you first in our lives, to listen for your guidance, and to hear the call to serve you. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus said to the twelve disciples, "A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

"So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

"Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."

Written by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 7
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: Matthew 10:24-39

In this season after Pentecost, we hear stories of Jesus ministry in the world and our call to engage in that mission. This season is also known as Ordinary Time coming from the word “ordinal” which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The color for this season is green and it is often referred to as the green growing time as we hear stories of what God is calling us to do in the world, we join in that call, and we grow in our faith.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel and Reading

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Theme: God Knows Us

Before Class: You will need two different translation of today’s reading. You can either supply enough Bibles (of both translations) or make copies of the scripture for each person. If you are going to do the activity, you will need plain paper, markers, pens, and crayons.

Beginning: Invite everyone to gather. Tell them a bit about what this Season after Pentecost means (you can use the description found at the beginning of the lesson if you would like to) and invite them to think about what this green growing time can mean for them.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, we ask you to be with us as we explore what your words mean for our lives. Guide us as we seek to do your mission in the world. Amen.

The Scripture: Matthew 10:24-39

You will be reading the lesson today twice and will need two different readers. Think about having two very different voices read this such as male or female, young or old. Before reading the lesson the first time, invite people to listen for a word or phrase that stood out for them.

Invite the first reader to read the lesson.

After a few moments of silence, invite the group to say what word or phrase stood out for them.

When you feel everyone has shared, invite the group to listen once more and to listen for what Jesus is saying to them. Invite the second reader to read the lesson.

After a few moments of silence, invite the group to say what they heard Jesus saying to them.

After everyone has shared, you can begin with the questions or go to the activity.

Questions:

- I wonder what it was like for those listening to Jesus' words for the first time?
- What do you think their response may have been?
- I wonder why these words are difficult to hear?
- I wonder how these words might make us feel liberated?

Activity Option: Invite the group to respond to the lesson by creating a drawing, poem, or representation of what this world may look like. What would it look like to have all things spoken, to have no fear, to have God come first, etc.

Getting Closure: Invite them to share what they came up with in the activity time or, if you did not do the activity, pose the question to them – what would this world look like to have all things spoken, to have no fear, to have God come first, etc. – and invite them to share how the world might be different.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us put you first in our lives, to listen for your guidance, and to hear the call to serve you. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus said to the twelve disciples,

"A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

"So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

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"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

"For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."

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