

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.

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