

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 10
Gospel Lesson for Younger Children

Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

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

We skip from Chapter 11 in Matthew to Chapter 13. Chapter 12 is important because this is where Jesus is being challenged over and over by various groups of people. What we are reading today is some of the response to those ongoing challenges. Jesus uses parables to teach as well as deal with conflict that is around him. The parable of the sower has many layers and much to discuss with no easy answers for us, and that is where we will begin our discussion today.

Theme: Seeds and Soil

Before Class: You will need pictures of a dirt path, rocky ground, thorny ground, and good soil; seed packets, paper, markers, glue, and copies of the scripture lesson. If you are doing the planting seeds activities, you will need seeds, small seed containers or paper cups, soil, and water. Make sure you get seeds that grow quickly such as herbs, grass, etc.

Beginning: Invite everyone to gather and paraphrase for them the Notation for This Week’s Gospel so they can understand what comes before this and that this parable is a response to Jesus being challenged.

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 understand these words and how to sow the seeds you have given to us. Amen.

The Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Jesus left the house and went to sit on the beach. Soon a crowd of people were gathered around him. There were so many people there that he was forced to get into a boat and from the boat, he taught the crowd of people telling them this story.

A farmer went out to plant seed. As the farmer scattered the seed, some fell onto the dirt road and the birds ate it. Some fell on the gravel where it grew quickly, but the roots of the plant couldn’t put down roots, so it withered and died. Some of the seeds fell among the weeds and when the seed sprouted, the weeds did not let it grow. Some seeds fell on good soil and made a harvest bigger than we can imagine.

Jesus asked those around him, “Are you listening? Really listening? This is what the story is about.” Then Jesus explained to them that the seeds are God’s word falling in various places. When the seed falls on the dirt path, or the gravel, or the thorny ground, the seed does not take root and thrive because it is not nourished. When God’s word is heard but not nourished in us, those words may also wither like the seeds. But when our hearts are ready to hear God’s word, they are like the seeds that fell on good soil and grew and created many, many plants. When God’s word is in our hearts and souls, we will grow and so will those around us.

Questions:

- I wonder if you have ever planted seeds?
- Is it easy or hard?
- What do we have to do to take care of the seeds after they are planted?
- If the seeds are God’s word, I wonder what we can do to take care of them?

Activity: Sowing Seeds

Invite the children to create a picture of the path, rocky ground, thorny ground and good soil. They can glue the seeds in various places and then draw that they think it will look like from the parable story we heard.

Planting Seeds: Show the children pictures of a dirt path, rocky ground, thorny ground, and good soil. Talk about which ones might help seeds grow. Which ones won’t? Why? Invite the children to use the containers, soil, and seeds to plant their own seeds to take home.

Getting Closure: Invite them to share what they learned about seeds today or to share the pictures that they created.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us understand your words and parables so that the seeds can be planted and grow in us. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Written by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 10
Gospel Lesson for Older Children

Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

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

We skip from Chapter 11 in Matthew to Chapter 13. Chapter 12 is important because this is where Jesus is being challenged over and over by various groups of people. What we are reading today is some of the response to those ongoing challenges. Jesus uses parables to teach as well as deal with conflict that is around him. The parable of the sower has many layers and much to discuss with no easy answers for us, and that is where we will begin our discussion today.

Theme: Seeds and Soil

Before Class: You will need seed packets, paper, markers, glue, and copies of the scripture lesson. If you are doing the planting seeds activities, you will need seeds, small seed containers or paper cups, soil, and water. Make sure you get seeds that grow quickly such as herbs, grass, etc.

Beginning: Invite everyone to gather and paraphrase for them the Notation for This Week’s Gospel so they can understand what comes before this and that this parable is a response to Jesus being challenged.

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 understand these words and how to sow the seeds you have given to us. Amen.

The Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

You will need two readers today. The first will read verses 1-9, the second 18-23.

Questions:

- I wonder what you think about this Gospel?
- What questions does it make you ask?
- I wonder if you have ever planted seeds?
- Is it easy or hard?
- What do we have to do to take care of the seeds after they are planted?
- I wonder who the sower might be?
- I wonder what kinds of seeds they are scattering?

- If the seeds are God’s word, I wonder what we can do to take care of them?
- What kinds of seeds to we scatter?
- I wonder what the path, rocky ground, thorny ground, and good soil might look like?

Activity: Sowing Seeds

Invite the children to create a picture of the path, rocky ground, thorny ground and good soil. They can glue the seeds in various places and then draw that they think it will look like from the parable story we heard.

Planting Seeds: Show the children pictures of a dirt path, rocky ground, thorny ground, and good soil. Talk about which ones might help seeds grow. Which ones won’t? Why? Invite the children to use the containers, soil, and seeds to plant their own seeds to take home.

Getting Closure: Invite them to share what they learned about seeds today or to share the pictures that they created.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us understand your words and parables so that the seeds can be planted and grow in us. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Written by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 10
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

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: Seeds and Soil

Before Class: You will need two different translations of today’s reading.

Beginning: Invite everyone to gather and paraphrase for them the Notation for This Week’s Gospel so they can understand what comes before this and that this parable is a response to Jesus being challenged.

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 understand these words and how to sow the seeds you have given to us. Amen.

The Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

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 this Gospel stirs in us?
- I wonder what questions this Gospel brings up for us?
- Speaking for yourself, think about the various kinds of soil, what do you think those things would represent for you today? (What would be the rocky ground, the path, the good soil?)
- Where or how does the seed take root for you?
- I wonder if there are ways in which we can help the seeds find good soil?

Getting Closure: Invite them to share what stood out for them in our discussion today.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us understand your words and parables so that the seeds can be planted and grow in us. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

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