

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: John 1:43-51

Background

Epiphany means several things: a gift is received; the gift must be shared. Jesus appears to be suggesting a rhythm, a balance to our lives. We go inward to be with God, to receive; we go out in the world to share what we have been given – still with God. We are called to balance the pouring out of our love with the resting in God. We are called to heal by just showing up, by laying on hands, by sharing what we have. This good news that was for the few people who heard it up close and personal is ours because they reached out and shared it. It will belong to those who have not yet heard, if we accept our call to share the story by how we live out our lives and as St. Francis said, “with words, if necessary.”

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

Jesus has begun to put together his team. In this passage, Philip hears Jesus say, "Come with me." And he does. As it is dawning on Philip who this Jesus really is, he goes and finds his slightly skeptical friend, Nathanael, to tell him that they have found the one they had heard about. Nathanael remains dubious—how could anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip, confident that Nathanael will see what he has seen, insists, "Come with me." Jesus sees Nathanael as he really is and calls him forth. Nathanael knows, now, that Jesus is the "Son of God."

Theme: Come and See

Before class: You will need paper and crayons or markers. Decide how to put the story into your own words.

Beginning: What has been happening in the lives of the children this past week? Invite them to tell you something funny – or something sad. Be prepared to offer something that happened to you (seeing a special friend, holding a tiny puppy – whatever).

Praying: Thank you, God that we can be here today. Thank you for (and NAME each child) and for this time we have this morning to hear a story you want us to hear. Amen.

The Story: John 1:43-51 Jesus wants to share. There is work to do, and he knows things he wants to show others. So Jesus starts looking around for some people to help him. "Hmm," said Jesus. "Hmm. Philip? Yes. Philip." "Come with me," Jesus said to Philip. And Philip said, "OK!" Philip had a friend with a long name: Nathanael. "Hey, Nathanael, you should come with me and my friend Jesus." Nathanael is not sure. "Aw, come on, Nathanael, come with me and you'll see." "OK," says Nathanael. He goes with Philip and then he becomes one of Jesus’ followers and friends.

Acting it Out: When Jesus chooses people, they go out and find someone else to join the group. We need someone to be Jesus who tells Philip to "come with me;" we need someone to be Philip to go tell Nathanael; and we need someone to be Nathanael to be not so sure, but to go anyway. (Invite the children to switch roles, or let a new set of children act out this passage.)

Art Activity: Each child needs a piece of paper and access to some crayons. It would be good if you choose to draw also. Invite the children to draw Jesus calling Philip and Philip going out and bringing in Nathanael. You might draw these three in a circle. You could invite the children to write these words in the middle of the circle: Come with me.

Do the children think these three people kept Jesus a secret? Do they think they probably told a bunch of people? Think about people telling people, who tell people, who tell people (etc. etc.) right up to this day, with us hearing the story – and we can go tell people! We hear the stories from the Bible, from our priest (be sure to add the name), from our friends, and from each other. (If you heard the story from a particular person, you might want to tell the children about it, briefly.)

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share who they would invite to come and see Jesus.

Closing Prayer: Thank you for John the Baptist, Philip, and Nathanael, who went out and found people to come hear Jesus. Thank you that we, too, get to hear these stories. Amen.

Edited by: The Rev. Shannon Kelly

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Older Children

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Background

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Theme: Come and See

Before Class: You will need copies of the scripture for each child. If you are going to have the children read it in parts, you can use the script found below.

Beginning: Tell the children that Jesus is beginning to put together his team in the passage we will read today. Ask them to notice how he does it.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, that you invite us to work along with you. Amen.

The Story: John 1:43-51 Invite four children to read the parts of Narrator, Jesus, Philip, and Nathanael.

Reflection Questions:

- Why do they think Jesus is gathering these people?
- I wonder why Philip was so eager to join?
- I wonder why Nathanael was not so sure?
- What might have been Nathanael's decision if Philip had not been there to encourage him?
- Notice that in the story, when Jesus calls someone, that person goes and tells someone else.

- Who told us about Jesus? Who might have told them? Help them to see the story is told to someone who tells it to someone else, and so on through the years until it comes to us, right here, in this classroom?
- What might happen to this story if we don't tell others about it?

Come and See: Let's imagine someone we know who might be curious about Jesus. How could we help this person risk coming to church with us to find out about Jesus? Act this out by inviting one child to play the Philip role (eager to share) and another play Nathanael (not so sure about this).

Invitation: Take some time to brainstorm with the children about ways in which they can invite others to hear the story of Jesus. How do we tell people about Jesus in words? How do we tell people about Jesus in our actions? You can invite them to create invitation cards or telling each other what they know about Jesus so they can better tell others.

Getting Closure: Have children take one moment and think about why they are happy to know Jesus. Invite them to share with the class and encourage them to share it with the person on their mind. Prepare to share a story of a time when you told someone about Jesus.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for all the people who have kept your story in people's hearts. Thank you that we, too, got to hear the story. Help us to share the story with others. Amen.

Edited by: The Rev. Shannon Kelly

John 1:43-51

Narrator: The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him,

Jesus: ‘Follow me.’

Narrator: Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him,

Philip: ‘We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.’

Narrator: Nathanael said to him,

Nathanael: ‘Can anything good come out of Nazareth?’

Philip: ‘Come and see.’

Narrator: When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him,

Jesus: ‘Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!’

Narrator: Nathanael asked Jesus,

Nathanael: ‘Where did you come to know me?’

Jesus: ‘I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.’

Nathanael: ‘Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!’

Jesus: ‘Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these. Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.’

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: John 1:43-51

Background

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Jesus has begun to put together his team. In this passage, Philip hears Jesus say, "Come with me." And he does. As it is dawning on Philip who this Jesus really is, he goes and finds his slightly skeptical friend, Nathanael, to tell him that they have found the one they had heard about. Nathanael remains dubious—how could anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip, confident that Nathanael will see what he has seen, insists, "Come with me." Jesus sees Nathanael as he really is and calls him forth. Nathanael knows, now, that Jesus is the "Son of God."

Theme: Come and See

Before: You will need copies of the scripture for today for each person.

Beginning: Tell the class that for the rest of this season, Jesus will be building on this dual theme: receiving that creates the setting for giving, and giving that creates the space for receiving.

Creating The Setting: Invite the class to notice, as they read the passage for today, the way evangelism was done in Jesus’ time: "Evangelism AD 30."

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for being so patient with us as we try to hold in our hearts the messages you send to us. Amen.

The Scripture: John 1:43-51 Invite one person to read the lesson for today. Invite the group to listen particularly for Philip’s side of the story.

After it has been read, invite the group to share what they noticed about Philip’s side of the story.

Invite a second person to read it again, this time invite the group to focus on Nathanael’s journey.

After it has been read, invite the group to share what they noticed about Nathanael's story.

Reflection Questions:

- What do we think "grabbed" Philip and made it possible for him to so quickly choose to follow Jesus?
- Since Jesus had already called Andrew and Peter, who came from the same hometown as Philip, do you suppose they had had a conversation with Philip?
- What concept did Philip choose to try to convince Nathanael?
- Why was Nathanael so worried about anything "good" coming out of Nazareth? (Nazareth was not a classy city. Expectations were that leaders would come from someplace like Bethlehem.)
- What did Jesus notice under the fig tree that convinced Nathanael?

Option: This is Evangelism AD 30. How do we get the story out today?

The Episcopal Church, at General Convention in the year 2000 proclaimed the 20/20 initiative, which is to double the number of members in the Episcopal Church by the year 2020. What obstacles do we see in our community to doubling our population? What positive things do we see in our community that could help make this happen? What might we be called to do?

Getting Closure: Name one thing that we could do to tear down the obstacles or build up the strengths of the community to bring people to Jesus.

Closing Prayer: O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (Book of Common Prayer, page 100)

John 1:43-51

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."
⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." ⁴⁹Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

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