

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year B – Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
**Lesson Plans for Younger Children**

**Scripture: John 17:6-19**

**Background:** Easter - the unearned gift of grace. The reflective season of “going in” that Lent provided (no matter what disciplines we undertook, nor even how well we attended to them) explodes on Easter. Of course, we cannot “figure it out.” How comforting, then, to have these scriptures, showing first how the disciples struggled to grasp what had happened and then stories of Jesus before the crucifixion, which are written in the light of the Resurrection.

As Easter people we know, as Paul said, that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God. We are people who expect life out of death. And so, in Eastertide we celebrate the wonder and prepare ourselves to take the awesome message out into the world on Pentecost.

**A Notation for this Week’s Gospel**

Jesus reports to God. Jesus has done the work given him to do. A little band of believers is trained to do the work Jesus has given them to do. Jesus lifts these people up to God. As he does so, we, and our ministries are also lifted up. We are not immune to pain, suffering, or even defeat. But God offers protection from the evil one, in all we do. And, in all we do, Jesus asks, “that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.”

**Theme: God’s Mission, Our Mission**

**Before:** If your budget permits, purchase enough glow-in-the-dark stars so that each child can have one to take home and at least one can go on your Easter tree or Easter mobile. If this is not possible, glitter and construction paper can substitute. You will also need some yarn to attach the stars to the Easter tree or Easter mobile. This may be your last session with these children as it is the end of this unit. You may also choose to have a simple party with treats and games. This session forms a bit of a review of what has been considered in this unit. The older children have been invited to produce a mini play and they may want to present it to your group. Check with the teacher of that group to see if that is the plan.

**Beginning:** Greet each child, and when all are assembled, tell them what you will be doing today. (If there is to be a party, or a presentation from the older children, let them know ahead of time.)

**Praying:** Thank you, Jesus, for helping your friends get ready to do their work and for helping us to get ready to do ours. Amen.

**The Story: John 17:6-19** This past week we celebrated what we call the Ascension. It is the time Jesus went back to be with God and his friends were now ready to do the work he had given them to do. Now that Jesus is with God, he is right here with us. And he is with everyone, everywhere. He had to go back to be with God so he could do this. Before he left to go be with God, he had a long conversation with God. He told God that he was sending his friends out to do

God's work. His friends taught their friends, who taught their friends, and today we are learning together.

**Activity:** To help us remember that Jesus is right here with us in a special way that we cannot see, we have these little stars. In the daytime, we can see them. And at night, before we go to sleep, we can see them because they soak up light in the day and shine in the night. (Find a dark place so the children can see that the stars do glow in the dark. First let the stars soak up a bit of light.)

If you do not have the stars, tell the children they are going to make stars to take home to remind them that stars glow in the dark and are there in the day – even though we cannot see them. Give each child a pre-cut star shape and let them decorate the stars – adding glitter if you have that.

You can also have them decorate one of the Easter symbols found at the end of the lesson.

If you are going to have a party, now is the time! If the older children are coming in, and they are not yet ready, play a game with the children.

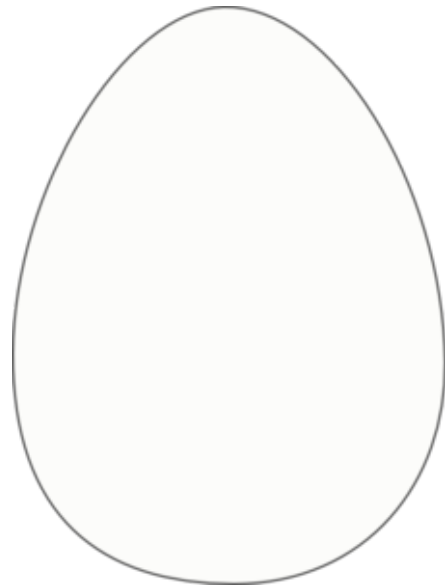
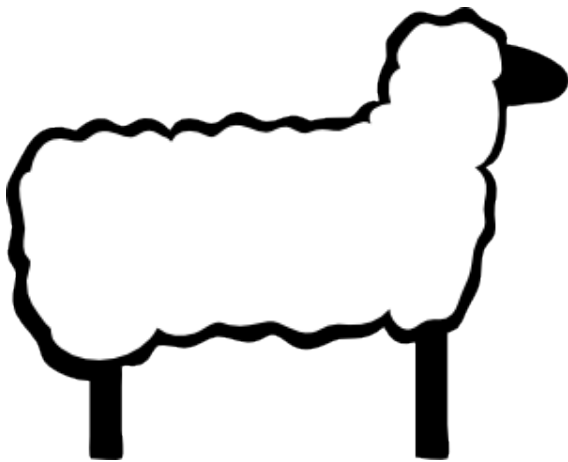
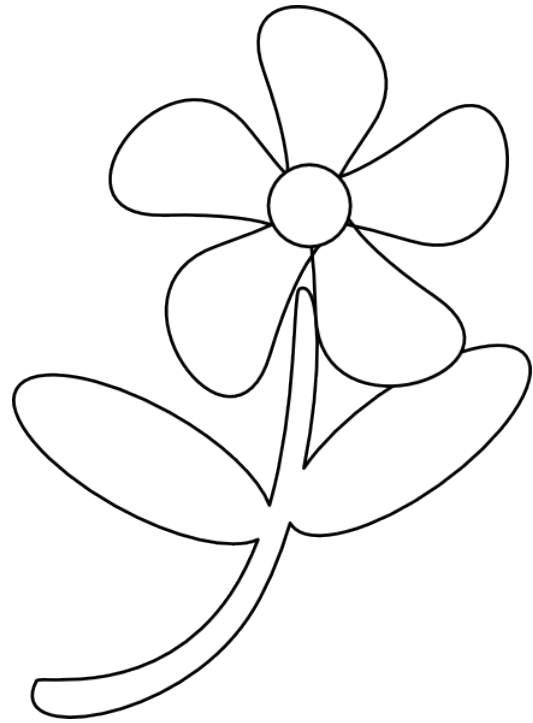
**Possible Game: Hide a Star** One child takes one of the stars while all the other children close eyes tight. When the child has hidden the star, the child says: OK, come find the star! If the children are looking in the wrong place, the child says: “Cold!” As they get closer, the child says: “Warmer!” And as they get very close the child may say: “Hot!” When the star is found, another child takes a turn hiding the star, while all the other children close their eyes.

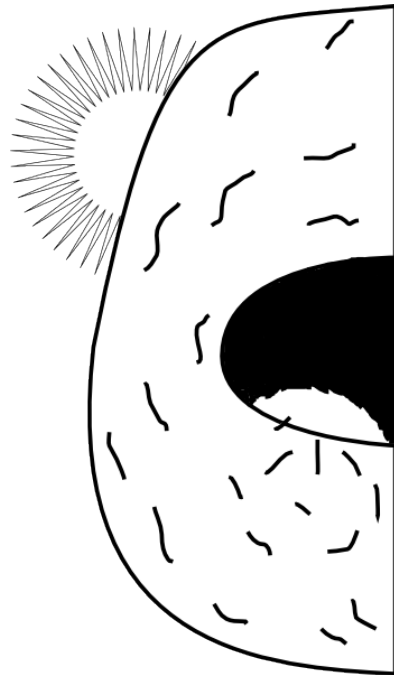
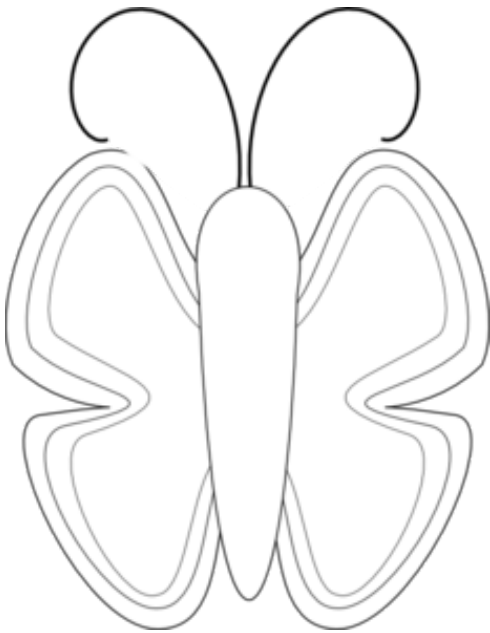
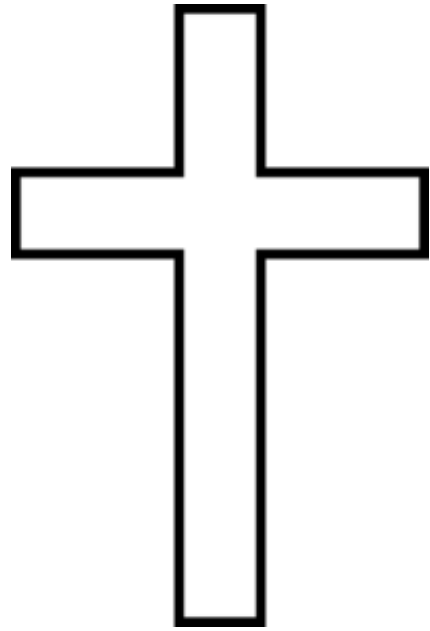
**Getting closure:** Tell the children to take their star home and put it where they can see it when they get into bed at night. Tell them the star will help remind them that Jesus is right here with them.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus, for the time we have had together. Thank you for always being right here with us – wherever we go. Amen.

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**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year B – Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**

**Scripture: John 17:6-19**

**Background:** Easter - the unearned gift of grace. The reflective season of “going in” that Lent provided (no matter what disciplines we undertook, nor even how well we attended to them) explodes on Easter. Of course, we cannot “figure it out.” How comforting, then, to have these scriptures, showing first how the disciples struggled to grasp what had happened and then stories of Jesus before the crucifixion, which are written in the light of the Resurrection.

As Easter people we know, as Paul said, that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God. We are people who expect life out of death. And so, in Eastertide we celebrate the wonder and prepare ourselves to take the awesome message out into the world on Pentecost.

**A Notation for this Week’s Gospel**

Jesus reports to God. Jesus has done the work given him to do. A little band of believers is trained to do the work Jesus has given them to do. Jesus lifts these people up to God. As he does so, we, and our ministries are also lifted up. We are not immune to pain, suffering, or even defeat. But God offers protection from the evil one, in all we do. And, in all we do, Jesus asks, “that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.”

**Theme: God’s Mission, Our Mission**

**Before:** This is the last session in this unit, and if the class is not going to continue, you might want to have a small party with treats. Look at the options suggested and make the decision that works best for your group. If you are going to suggest the children do an impromptu play, look back over the earliest lessons in this unit, since they will be easier to adapt into a play. The children may want to “produce” their play and the younger children may want to see the play. Check with the teacher of the younger children. Another option suggested is a “Silhouette” production. If you choose this option, you will need an old white sheet (the thinner the better), and either a couple of lamps or a couple of strong flashlights. You will also need dark construction paper and scissors – small sticks and masking tape are optional.

**Beginning:** Tell the children this is the last Sunday in the season of Easter. Next week is Pentecost, a special Sunday in the Church. Invite the children to make a choice between the two options for telling the Easter stories - or if you have made a decision, describe to the children what they are going to be doing.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for all the stories we have had in this season of Easter. Thank you for loving us so much that you sent your Son, Jesus, to be with us. Amen.

**The Story: John 17:6-19** (If your church had a service for Ascension and you think any of the children might have been to the service, ask the children if anyone knows what happened last Thursday in church. Otherwise, tell them that last Thursday was Ascension - the day we

celebrate Jesus going back to be with God.) In the story we have today, Jesus is having one last conversation in prayer with God while Jesus was still here on earth.

Ask for a volunteer to read John 17: verses 15-19.

**Reflection Questions:**

- Who is the “them” Jesus is talking to God about? (His disciples and us as well.)
- What happens when we are “protected from the evil one?” (We make choices that help us stay out of trouble.)
- What does “They do not belong to the world” mean? (We turn our hearts to God. We look at the world differently than most people do. We are Easter People.)
- What does “sanctify them in the truth” mean? (Help them know what is really true, what is really the right thing to do.)
- Let’s see if we can remember some of the stories we have heard so we can figure out what to do in a short play. Can anyone remember the story we heard on Easter? (If there is no response, offer some hints: a tomb, some women, an angel, etc.)
- Where were the disciples, Jesus’ friends? (Hiding in fear, thinking they would be next to be killed.)
- What did Jesus say when he showed up where they were hiding? (“Peace be with you.”)
- What did Jesus ask the disciples to give him? (Something to eat.)
- What did the disciples give Jesus when he told them he was hungry? (Broiled fish)

**Activity:** Help the children decide how to produce their play, helping them choose which story they want to portray and helping them choose parts if they are going to act it out. (If you have insufficient children to take each part, some can play more than one part.)

If the silhouette is the choice, help the children set up the “stage” by stretching the sheet between the two lamps (or sources of light) and cutting out very simple silhouettes from the construction paper. Create a very simple pattern they can copy. If you have sticks or tongue depressors (or popsicle sticks) fasten them to the silhouettes with masking tape or transparent tape so the children can duck down below the “stage” and move their silhouettes to show the story. The narrator could read the passage from the Bible or simply describe what is going on.

When all is ready, the show goes on!

**Getting Closure:** Especially if this is the last session for the spring, invite the group to consider ways they might stay in touch with each other during the summer.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, for this time we have had together. Thank you for loving us and for being with us in everything we do. Amen.

## John 17:6-19

<sup>6</sup>“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup>for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup>I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.

<sup>11</sup>And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. <sup>12</sup>While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. <sup>13</sup>But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. <sup>14</sup>I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

<sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

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**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year B – Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
**Lesson Plans for Adults**

**Scripture: John 17:6-19**

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**Theme: God’s Mission, Our Mission**

**Before:** This is the last Sunday in the season of Easter, so you may choose to create some closure, unless the group will continue to meet.

**Beginning:** Tell the group that we have, today, another Ecclesiastical flashback situation: Last Thursday we celebrated Ascension – the time Jesus ascended to be with God, leaving his followers to continue the work he had begun. Yet the passage we have for today happens before the crucifixion, as have the last three sessions.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the time this group is together to work with the Word and encourage each other as we attempt to do the work you have given us to do. Amen.

**The Scripture: John 17:6-19** Jesus is reporting back to God. The final report is from this side. Our vantage point, 2,000 years later will influence what we see in the passage. This is a fairly long passage, so more than one reader would be helpful. Suggest that one person read verses 6-11, another 12-15, and a third person 16-19.

**Reflection Questions:**

- What stands out for you from this passage?
- Jesus makes a distinction between “the world” and “those whom you gave me.” What does this imply to us? (It can be seen that Jesus knew that everyone would not accept his message.)



- Who would we include in “those whom you gave (Jesus)”? Who would we include in “the world”?
- How does it strike you to read that Jesus is so concerned that “they may have my joy made complete in themselves”? What do you think this “joy” means to Jesus? (The freedom his message brings as well as the connection to Jesus that it conveys, among other things.)
- What do we think are the manifestations of the “evil one”? (Injustice, misery, hunger, wars, for example.)
- Jesus does not ask God to take his people out of the world, but he makes clear he does not think his people belong to the world. How do we live in our world – and not “belong” to it? What things does the culture proclaim we “need” that we do not agree that we need?
- What does it mean to be “sanctified in truth” (Consecrated, taken into God's realm, living holy lives.)
- “Who, me?” We may be thinking. How do we reconcile our own stumbling with Jesus’ commitment to us? (God’s love for us is unconditional and is not dependent upon our “getting it right.” God's love for us gives us the courage to keep on trying.)

**Getting Closure:** Especially if this is the last session for the spring, invite the group to consider what measures they might take to continue the fellowship begun here. (Continue to meet at this time during the summer? Find partners in the group to phone or e-mail? Meet once a month to read scripture and pray together?)

**Closing Prayer:**

*For the Mission of the Church*

Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
*Amen.*

## John 17:6-19

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