

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

Scripture: Mark 4:35-41

Background: We are now in the long season known as Ordinary Time, which runs through Christ the King Sunday. As we take this journey, nourished by the scriptures appointed for the season and empowered by our baptisms, we are invited to be on the lookout for all the blessings found in the ordinary – to see God at work here and now. And we are compelled to share our blessings with others.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

Amid the storms that toss our boats is the assurance that Jesus sleeps on a pillow in our boat! Are we comfortable enough to look at the question Jesus poses? "Why are you afraid?"

Theme: Jesus in the Storm

Before: If you are combining younger and older children, see the lesson plan for older children.

The craft activity suggested is to create a small pillow to remind the children of what we hear in this story – that when the disciples feel afraid and alone, they discover Jesus asleep on a pillow close by. The pillow will require these materials:

- At least one felt square per child (two felt squares per child will, obviously, make a larger pillow). You will also need to make an extra pillow for the last lesson in this Early Summer session.
- Pillow stuffing, available in fabric stores.
- A stapler to “sew” the pillow edge – most office staplers are sufficiently large enough.
- White glue for younger children to secure the pillow’s edges.

Beginning: Greet the children and be sure you know their names and they know each other's names. Ask the children if anyone has ever gone on a boat ride, or if anyone been in a boat with oars. If not, show them how rowing a boat works by pretending to pull on oars.

Opening Prayer: Glorious and Adventurous God, thank you for your wonderful creation and for the waters of life you have given us. Be with us as we hear about you and your disciples this morning. Amen.

The Story: This story happens in the evening and Jesus is tired. He has been talking to people all day, so his friends tell him to get into their boat and they will row him to the other side of the lake.

We need a boat! (Either turn a table upside down, or simply create an imaginary boat) Let's all get in this boat – I need lots of people to help me row. Each of you, grab an oar and row with me as I tell you this story.

At first the friends of Jesus were gently rowing the boat, and it was going slowly across the lake. Suddenly a big storm began. The wind blew so hard that water was splashing into the boat. (Pretend to wipe the water from your face). The people were getting very scared.

And Jesus? He was sound asleep, his face on a pillow, in the back of the boat. "Hey, Jesus," his friends cried out: "Don't you even care that we are about to drown?" Jesus woke up, rubbed his eyes, looked around and then said to the wind: "Peace! Be still." And all of a sudden the wind stopped. The waves stopped. It was all calm.

Jesus looked at his friends. "Why were you so scared? Didn't you know I am right here with you?"

Jesus friends were amazed and whispered to each other as they continued to row across the lake. "Wow!" Even the WIND obeys Jesus."

Wondering Questions: Spend some time wondering with the children.

- I wonder if you have ever been on a boat ride?
- I wonder if you have ever been scared in a storm?
- I wonder if you have ever slept through a storm?
- I wonder if you have ever prayed when you were scared and asked Jesus to be with you?

Activity:

In today's story we hear about how Jesus calmed the storm around the disciples and they were amazed.

To remind us that Jesus is right here with us – even when we are scared – we are going to make a small pillow to take home. (Make available the supplies you have brought, show the children how to fashion a pillow. Make one also to keep for the last Sunday in this Early Summer set of sessions.)

Getting Closure: Ask the children to help you make a prayer they can remember to say when they get scared.

Closing Prayer: Say the prayer that you and the children have come with or close with this: Thank you, Jesus, for being with us in happy times and in scary times. Amen.

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

Scripture: Mark 4:35-41

Background: We are now in the long season known as Ordinary Time, which runs through Christ the King Sunday. As we take this journey, nourished by the scriptures appointed for the season and empowered by our baptisms, we are invited to be on the lookout for all the blessings found in the ordinary – to see God at work here and now. And we are compelled to share our blessings with others.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Amid the storms that toss our boats is the assurance that Jesus sleeps on a pillow in our boat! Are we comfortable enough to look at the question Jesus poses? "Why are you afraid?"

Theme: Jesus in the Storm

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the lesson for each child. You will need colored chalk or calculator tape and markers available.

If you are also working with younger children, read the lesson plan for them before planning your lesson.

Beginning: Ask the children if anyone has been out on a boat with oars, or if no one has, are they familiar with how the oars work. If they are not, pantomime how one would row a boat. Tell the children we will read a story about Jesus in a rowboat. Ask them to imagine how we can act out this passage after we have read it. Ask them if they will be willing sharing the story with the younger children, so they can be prepared if they want to.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for the people who stayed right with Jesus and learned from him so we can learn about Jesus. Amen.

The Story: Mark 4:35-41 Ask for volunteers to read – Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Jesus, Disciples. If you would like, everyone can read the disciples part.

Reflection Questions:

- Why do you think Jesus was sleeping? (He was probably very tired from a long day of teaching, and he probably trusted the disciples to get him to the other side of the lake.)
- What scared the disciples? (Fierce winds that were causing water to flood into the boat.)
- Why do you think the disciples said what they did in verse 38? (They could not believe that Jesus would sleep through all this chaos.)
- What did Jesus say to the wind? ("Peace! Be still.")
- What did Jesus say to the disciples? (Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?)
- What did the disciples mumble to each other in response to what Jesus said? (See the end of the reading)

Made for TV: Tell the children that this scene needs to be televised. Ask them to look around your space for the props they will need. Will a table, turned upside down, for instance, serve as a boat? What will work as the pillow? Oars? (Remind them that competent actors such as they are can create convincing imaginary props.)

When the children have "rehearsed" their play, you can be the appreciative audience. And perhaps the children will perform their play for the younger children.

Getting Closure: Ask the children if they want to share a time in their lives when they were really scared and then realized that they were not all alone. Feel free to offer such an experience of yours, if you choose. The words to write in chalk – or on calculator tape – could be: "Peace! Be Still!"

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for being with us in happy times and in scary times. Amen.

Mark 4:35-41

Narrator 1: On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to them,

Jesus: “Let us go across to the other side.”

Narrator 2: And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him,

Disciples: “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

Narrator 1: Jesus woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea,

Jesus: “Peace! Be still!”

Narrator 2: Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them,

Jesus: “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?”

Narrator 1: And they were filled with great awe and said to one another,

Disciples: “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

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

Scripture: Mark 4:35-41

Background: We are now in the long season known as Ordinary Time, which runs through Christ the King Sunday. As we take this journey, nourished by the scriptures appointed for the season and empowered by our baptisms, we are invited to be on the lookout for all the blessings found in the ordinary – to see God at work here and now. And we are compelled to share our blessings with others.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Amid the storms that toss our boats is the assurance that Jesus sleeps on a pillow in our boat! Are we comfortable enough to look at the question Jesus poses? "Why are you afraid?"

Theme: Jesus in the Storm

Before Class: Make sure you have copies of the scripture for the day.

Beginning: As a way of introduction, go around the room, ask each person to give their name, an excellent movie they have seen recently or a book they are enjoying.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for these people in this time and this place and for Your Word, which we can enter into together. Amen.

The Scripture: Ask for volunteers to read the passage, one person reading the part of the narrator, one or more than one reading the lines for the disciples, and one reading the parts Jesus speaks. (See below for script)

Reflection Questions:

- Has anyone in this group had the experience of being out on a body of water in a storm? If so, would they share some memories of the event to help us understand the setting?
- Why do we think Jesus was asleep during the storm? (Exhaustion? He trusted his disciples?)
- Contrast the mood of the disciples throughout the lesson.
- Can anyone share a time that they were experiencing chaos, or a storm, or terror and suddenly there was calm, peace, and/or stillness?
- What do we make of Jesus' rebuke: "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" Is fear a sign of faithlessness? Why? Why not?
- I wonder how we would react if we were the disciples in the boat?
- Have there been times in your life when you have felt like the disciples in the boat?
- Where was Jesus in those moments?

Getting Closure: As a group, consider how each person will focus on noticing the blessings (those obvious and those hidden in plain sight) as we go through this week and be prepared to share them when we next meet.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for calming the storms in our lives as we are living through the storms. Guide us through the storm so we may witness your peace. Amen.

Edited by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

Mark 4:35-41

Narrator: On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to the disciples,

Jesus: ‘Let us go across to the other side.’

Narrator: And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him,

Disciples: ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’

Narrator: Jesus woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea,

Jesus: ‘Peace! Be still!’

Narrator: Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them,

Jesus: ‘Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?’

Narrator: And they were filled with great awe and said to one another,

Disciples: ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’

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