

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 9
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Mark 6:1-13

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

Although Jesus was stung by the hardened hearts of those in his own hometown, he realized that the prophet is not without honor -- except in his own hometown. So he moves on and begins to train his disciples. Two by two he sends them out to work in pairs, building their own relationships as they work with those who accept their ministry.

Theme: Two-by-Two

Before Class: You will need supplies to make friendship bracelets – string or chenille stems and pony beads. Think about what activity you can have the children do in prayers as a beginning illustration for class.

Beginning: After children have arrived, divide them into pairs of two. Choose a simple task that can be done two by two. And if you do not have an even number of children, you can be the other half of a pair. Perhaps it is arranging your space, moving a table, gathering chairs, passing out paper and crayons. It could be a simple clean-up project such as going outside and picking up trash and putting it in a plastic bag.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for showing friends how to work together. Thank you for friends who can work together to get things done. Amen.

The Story: Mark 6:1-13 Jesus and his friends had been traveling around the country. Now it was time for Jesus to send his friends out to do some of the work. Jesus knew that when two friends work together they can get more work done and they can support one another. So Jesus began to show his friends how to do this. They did not have big suitcases, or even backpacks. Jesus told his friends to go, two-by-two, and take nothing with them -- not a change of clothes, no extra shoes, no money. Sometimes people would be glad to see them, invite them into their houses, fix them supper, and listen to what they had to say. Sometimes people would not listen to them at all. Jesus told his friends to say thank you for whatever people gave them for supper (even if it was something they did not really like). If people did not listen to them, then the friends should just shake the sand out of their sandals and move on.

Act it Out: The children can act out this passage, both cheerful receptions and doors shut in the face. If you have an uneven number of children, one child can be the person in the house whom

the friends approach. Tell the welcoming child to pretend to bring out a nice supper and listen to the two who come. Then when the next two come, the same householder will not even open the door. The children will probably be able to figure out how to shake the sand out of their sandals. Continue the "enactment" until each child has had a chance to play the roll he or she wants to play.

Friendship bracelets:

Friendship bracelets can illustrate the "two-by-two" theme of this passage. The simplest way to make these bracelets is with a chenille stems (pipe cleaners) and beads with holes large enough for the stems to slide through. You can also use string or yarn instead of chenille stems.

Show the children what you have been able to gather to make friendship bracelets. Very young children will probably want to take home the bracelets they have made. Older children might enjoy making a bracelet for a friend and exchanging the bracelets they have made.

Getting Closure: Each child will have a bracelet to wear. Let the children tell each other about their bracelets. ("I choose this color bead, because," etc.)

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for giving us friends. Help us remember to work together and that you send us out two-by-two. Amen.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 9
Lesson Plans for Older Children

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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

Although Jesus was stung by the hardened hearts of those in his own hometown, he realized that the prophet is not without honor -- except in his own hometown. So he moves on and begins to train his disciples. Two by two he sends them out to work in pairs, building their own relationships as they work with those who accept their ministry.

Theme: Two-by-Two

Before Class: You will need copies of the scripture, paper, pencils and a plan for a scavenger hunt. If you have sufficient adult help, let the children and adult supervisors go into various parts of your church. Perhaps you could do this outside, if your space accommodates it. If you must remain in your space, hide items around the room. You could pick a travel theme and hide things like keys, an airline ticket envelope, and bus tokens. Or you could use a ministry theme and hide a Bible, a Book of Common Prayer, a Hymnal, and a church bulletin. Chose items you can easily lay your hands on. Before the children arrive, hide the items. Or if they are to "find" the items and make notes on where they found them, make that list (e.g., three crosses not in the church, a guest book, etc.).

Beginning: Tell the children that Jesus understood that most things are easier to do if we have someone doing them with us. Tell the children that today we want to do things two by two. You can either let the children self-select pairs or assign them into pairs by counting off. Have them sit together in pairs.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for noticing that some things are easier to do two by two. Thank you for the friends you send us. Amen

The Story: (See below for scripture) Unless you have lots of time, read only verses 7-13 of Mark 6. One child could read 7-9, another child could read verses 10-13.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder why Jesus sent the disciples out two by two? (Invite them to think about what they experienced in the scavenger hunt working together)
- Why did he tell them to take nothing for their journey but a walking stick? (They were to live as the people they visited lived.)

- What else did Jesus tell them they did not need to take with them? (No bread, no bag, no money -- not even an extra tunic, extra clothes)
- What did he tell them to do if they were welcomed in someone's home? (Stay there. Don't keep moving around.)
- What were they to do if they were NOT welcomed? (Shake all the sand out of their sandals and move on.)
- What happened when they were welcomed? (People listened to them as they told them about Jesus, and they were able to heal people who were sick.)
- I wonder what it is like when you go visit someplace new with a friend?
- What kinds of things do you bring on a journey?
- I wonder how Jesus' instructions could apply to us today?

Scavenger Hunt: Invite the children to go on a scavenger hunt two-by-two. If you do not have an even number of children you can have them go in one pair of three or perhaps you could "borrow" a youth or an adult from church. Describe the way you have set up the scavenger hunt (i.e., bringing back what they find or simply describing where they found it). Then define the boundaries (stay in the building, do not cross any street, or whatever else is necessary for safety). Tell them what time they need to be back in place.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to reflect on their scavenger hunt with their partner. What it easier or harder to find things? How did you and your partner work together?

Begin by telling the children of a time you and a partner worked together to accomplish something. A class you taught, a garden you planted, fish you caught, etc. Invite the children to share a time they worked with a partner and what they were able to do.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for being a friend to each of us. And thank you for the friends you find for us right here, this summer. Help us to work together in your name. Amen.

Mark 6:1-13

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ²On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. ⁴Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.” ⁵And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. ⁶And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching.

⁷He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; ⁹but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. ¹⁰He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. ¹¹If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. ¹³They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 9
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Mark 6:1-13

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

Although Jesus was stung by the hardened hearts of those in his own hometown, he realized that the prophet is not without honor -- except in his own hometown. So he moves on and begins to train his disciples. Two by two he sends them out to work in pairs, building their own relationships as they work with those who accept their ministry.

Theme: Two-by-Two

Before Class: Divide your group into pairs, either letting them self-select or go around the group having them number off. (The first person says "1," the second person says "2," the third person says "1," etc.) If you are going to do this, you will need to have a copy of some questions for each pair. Some suggested questions are offered, feel free to add your own, and then make sufficient copies. Or write all the questions on a sheet of newsprint and post it where all can see it.

Beginning: Describe to the class that you have planned for them to work in pairs and come together as a group as the end of your time together. Allow them to select a partner or pair them off.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for the reminder we find in today's scripture that you do not expect any of us to do all of the work that needs to be done by ourselves. Thank you for the concept of sharing the responsibilities. Amen.

The Scripture: Mark 6:1-13 Invite one person to read Mark 6:1-6 and a second one to read verses 7-13. If you have provided copies of the questions and you have a small space, some of the pairs might take chairs out into the hall, or even outside.

Reflection Questions:

(These are also printed at the end of the lesson with the scripture verse so you can print them for the pairs if you wish.)

- Share a time when you, or someone you know, was in the position of being a prophet "not without honor except in their hometown." As you get in touch with how that felt to you, consider how it might have been to Jesus. Why do you think he was "amazed at their unbelief"?

- Why do you think Jesus found it so important to send his disciples out two-by-two?
- In our times of suitcases, hair dryers, sunscreen, etc., how can we follow the instruction Jesus gave?
- What might verse 10 have to say to us as a church community?
- Share a time you brought a message that was welcomed by a person who really wanted to hear about your faith and truly listened.
- Share a time you thought you had a compelling message and you were not well received.

Getting Closure: Bring the groups back together and invite them to share one thing that really struck them. Conclude by considering our roles as the other half of a team that ministers in this community. What are we doing to help our clergy, lay leaders, youth, children, and fellow ministers in the work we are being called to do in this place?

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for the privilege of ministering and for the people you place in this work with us. Amen.

Mark 6:1-13

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ²On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. ⁴Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." ⁵And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. ⁶And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching.

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Reflection Questions:

Share a time when you, or someone you know, was in the position of being a prophet "not without honor except in their hometown." As you get in touch with how that felt to you, consider how it might have been to Jesus. Why do you think he was "amazed at their unbelief"?

Why do you think Jesus found it so important to send his disciples out two-by-two?

In our times of suitcases, hair dryers, sunscreen, etc., how can we follow the instruction Jesus gave?

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Share a time you thought you had a compelling message and you were not well received.

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