

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C—Advent 1
Lesson Plans for Younger Children
RCL Old Testament Readings—Track One

Scripture: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Background: Today we begin the season of Advent, the four weeks that prepare us for Christmas. Advent means “coming” and the One who is coming is the messiah, Jesus. We remember and celebrate Jesus’ birth and we make ourselves ready for the time that Jesus will come again, when God will make all things new. The stories we hear in this season are from the prophets, who bring us messages of great hope and deep joy as we wait and watch and wonder.

A Notation for This Week’s Reading: God promises to restore a kingdom in Israel.

Theme: God promises Justice and Goodness

Before Class: For the group you will need small squares of green tissue paper, playdough, gold glitter and gold star stickers. Each child will need a thin branch (sticks 8-10”), a clear plastic cup and gold pipe cleaners, at least three per child, to wrap around the branch.

Beginning: Prepare your gathering/prayer space with a cloth of blue or purple, whichever color your church uses in Advent. For the four weeks of Advent and two weeks of Christmas, you will need an Advent wreath and a Christ Candle, or four votive candles and a pillar candle, matches and a candlesnuffer. A chime is helpful to mark transitions but not necessary.

Opening Prayer: In this season of Advent, we light candles to remind us that Jesus, the light of the world, is coming. Holy God, help us get ready. Let our love of Jesus shine brightly in all that we do. Amen.

The Story: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Announce the story: *A reading from the prophet Jeremiah:*

Soon I will make good on the promises I made to you. When I do, a branch will grow on David’s family tree. This Branch will stand for justice and goodness in the land. Jerusalem will be safe from harm.

We will call this Branch: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what promises God makes to us? I wonder what promises we make to God?
- I wonder what this Branch could really be?

- Jeremiah says that this Branch stands for justice and goodness in the land. Justice means being treated fairly and having what you need. What would that kind of place look like? What would it feel like? Who could live there?

Activity: Invite the children to make reminders of this special Branch that stands for justice and goodness. First, they'll need to make something that the branch can "grow" in. Give each child a small piece of playdough. Sprinkle some gold glitter over each piece and ask the children to work the glitter into the dough. Then they can roll it into a ball. Next, ask them to choose a stick and plant the stick in their ball of playdough. Children can then wrap their stick with gold pipe cleaners. The stick and playdough now can be set into the plastic cup. Next, they can tuck squares of green tissue under the pipe cleaners for leaves. Twisting a corner of each square will help. Finally, they can put gold stars on outside of the plastic cup.

Getting Closure: These branches are a different kind of Christmas tree. They remind us that God did something new in sending Jesus to live among us, and Jesus stands for justice and goodness. When we follow Jesus, we stand for justice and goodness, too.

Closing Prayer:

Invite the children to repeat after you:

Dear God, (Dear God,)
 We thank you for the prophets (we thank you for the prophets)
 Who give us words (who give us words)
 Of hope and joy (of hope and joy)
 As we wait (as we wait)
 For the coming of Jesus. (for the coming of Jesus.)
 Amen. (Amen.)

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