

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C—Advent 4
Lesson Plans for Older Children
RCL Old Testament Readings—Track One

Scripture: Micah 5: 2-5a

Background: This is the fourth Sunday 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’s Chosen One will be from the House of David.

Theme: The Good, Peaceful Leader Comes

Before Class: Gather materials for building a town, perhaps a model of Bethlehem? You could use wood scraps or small wooden blocks and wood glue or download the free Bible Town template from <http://www.mylittlehouse.org/bible-town.html> and print onto cardstock for the class to cut, color and assemble. If you are building Bethlehem, you will also need to provide some reference books or articles about life in 1st century Israel such as Daily Life in the Time of Jesus by Miriam Feinberg Vamosh or <http://www.bible-archaeology.info/housing.htm>

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: Holy God, let the light of this Advent candle remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. May this light glow in us, kindling our love for you, sparking our imaginations, and making us burn with a desire to do your work in this world. Amen.

The Story: Micah 5: 2-5a

Ask a child to read the passage, or ask each child to read a sentence. After a moment of silence, invite them to name a word or a phrase or an image from the text that stood out to them. Pause, then read the entire passage aloud again.

It’s you, Bethlehem! You’re the tiny town from which the leader of Israel will come. He comes from a distinguished and ancient family. His people have been wandering for a while, but they will come home soon. And they will be well fed and cared for when their

strong, good leader is with them. Then, they'll live in a safe place, because their leader will be honored all over the world as a peacemaker.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what it feels like to wait for a strong, good leader? What does it feel like to come home after wandering?
- What does it mean to be a peacemaker?
- How are we peacemakers at home? At school? In the world?

Activity: Invite the children to work together to build a town, making decisions about where people will live, work, shop, worship, learn. If you are using the Bible Town template, you'll want to appoint some researchers to give some historical information as the children plan and construct.

Getting Closure: Working together collaboratively, making decisions for the good of all is a hallmark of being peacemakers and of following the Prince of Peace, Jesus. These skills are ones we develop and use throughout our lives, wherever we go and whatever we do.

Closing Prayer: God of love, you sent your prophets to show us the way of truth. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus, teach us to follow him so that we can be a part of bringing your kingdom of justice and goodness to earth. Amen.

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