

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 6**  
**Gospel Lesson for Younger Children**

**Scripture: Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23)**

In this season after Pentecost, we hear stories of Jesus ministry in the world and our call to engage in that mission. This season is also known as Ordinary Time coming from the word “ordinal” which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The color for this season is green and it is often referred to as the green growing time as we hear stories of what God is calling us to do in the world, we join in that call, and we grow in our faith.

**A Notation for This Week’s Gospel**

Our reading today is part of one of the major discourses in Matthew and it comes right after Matthew shares with us a collection of Jesus’ words and deeds. In our passage, Matthew is naming the disciples and the sending out of the 12 disciples as laborers in the harvest. This sets up Jesus’ ministry of sending people forth in ministry and mission to love and heal those around them.

*Note: Since this is a long passage, we will just be focusing on Matthew 9:35-10:8.*

**Theme: Laborers in the Harvest**

**Before Class:** You will need to create a “harvesting box.” Take a box and cover it with paper, leaving a slit at the top for people to insert their hand in. Color the box to make it look like a field. Put slips of paper in the box that say things like, “cure an illness, heal the sick, care for those in pain, help those in need, etc.” They need to be things the children can talk about or act out.

**Beginning:** Invite everyone to gather. Tell them a bit about what this Season after Pentecost means (you can use the description found at the beginning of the lesson if you would like to) and invite them to think about what this green growing time can mean for them.

**Opening Prayer:** Loving God, we ask you to be with us as we explore what it means for us to be laborers in the harvest. Guide us in our mission and ministry. Remind us that we have the authority to love and heal those around us. Amen.

**The Scripture: Matthew 9:35-10:8**

Read the story from a children’s bible or tell the story.

Jesus traveled to all the towns and villages, teaching in the places that the people met. He taught them about the good news of God’s love for them. He healed them in body, mind and spirit. As he looked at the people surrounding him he realized that they were like sheep without a shepherd and realized that there was much work to be done to teach them all of God’s love and promise

for them. He said to his disciples, “There is much to be harvested, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Then, Jesus called his twelve disciples and sent them out into the world to serve, heal, and care for the people. He gave them the power to be the harvest hands in doing God’s work. He told them, “Go to those in your neighborhood who are confused and hurting. Tell them that God is here. Heal them, raise the dead, cure the sick, and tend to those who no one else wants to be around.” He said to them, “You have been treated well, so treat others well.”

**Questions:**

- I wonder what it means to harvest?
- I wonder what Jesus might be calling us to harvest?
- I wonder if there are ways we can also be laborers in the harvest like the disciples? How can we heal and care for people?

**Activity: Harvesting**

Invite a pair of children to draw a word or phrase out of the “harvesting box.” Help them read it and then invite them to act it out or tell the class what they think it means or how they might do it.

After each has had a chance to do it, wonder with them.

I wonder how we might do these things today?

How can we be helpers in the world?

I wonder what God is inviting us to do now?

Then, invite the children to create pictures or poems telling us what they think Jesus is calling us to harvest. What is Jesus telling us to do? How are we being called to act or be in the world?

**Getting Closure:** Invite them to share what they came up with.

**Closing Prayer:** God of the Harvest, thank you for calling us to labor in your fields and become a part of this your creation. Guide us as we leave this place that we may continually hear your call to us to go, heal, and love. Amen.

**Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23)**

Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

[Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”]

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