

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Proper 21
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Background

As we continue to walk through “Ordinary Time” it is hard to imagine the lessons from our Old Testament scriptures as “ordinary” days. We hear fantastical accounts of kings, prophets, and courts and they sound so far away. But we are called to remember these stories of times past and to consider how ordinary days of ancestors relate to the ordinary days we face here and now.

A Notation for This Week’s Scripture

Today we jump to the end of the Book of Jeremiah. We hear him being undeterred from his mission. He is not letting go of what God has sent him to do. We hear a story of him buying land even though he is in prison. Why? Why is this important? Because “houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.” Even though imprisoned and people think he is done for, Jeremiah continues to build up the kingdom of God.

Theme: Building and Growing

Before Class: You will need supplies for the activities. For Growing, you will need seeds or small plants to be divided, soil, paper cups, and water. For Building, you will need popsicle sticks or other building materials, glue and markers.

Beginning: Gather the children around you and ask them how their week was. Ask them if they noticed anything that reminded them of God or of God’s love.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, we thank you today for helping us see and understand that the work you have for us is never done, that you are there to help us, and that we can work together to build your world together. Amen.

The Story: Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Tell the children this or use your own words.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the court of the guard that was in the palace of the king of Judah, where King Zedekiah of Judah had confined him. Zedekiah had said, “Why do you prophesy and say: Thus says the Lord: I am going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came to me: Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is going to come to you and say, “Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.” Then my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the Lord, and said to me, “Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and

redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.” Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. And I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy; and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard. In their presence I charged Baruch, saying, Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder how Jeremiah felt, being confined in the court – which is like being in prison?
- I wonder if it was hard to still listen for God and speak for God when he was in prison?
- I wonder why it was important for Jeremiah to buy property?
- I wonder what the land will be used for?

Activity:

Build and Grow

Invite the children to think about what Jeremiah may have done with the land. Have them make a plan on paper of what he may have done with the land to serve God and the people. This can be one big plan they can work on together, in small groups, or as individuals. What would they do with the property, knowing it was meant to help build up God and God’s love in the world?

Growing

Then, invite them to plant plants or seeds to talk home. Talk to them about caring for the plants or seeds. Invite them to decorate the cup if they have time.

Building

Use the building materials to create buildings or whatever the children envisioned the property needing. They can decorate the popsicle sticks and create something that will glorify God.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share what have created. Where do they see God building and growing things around them?

Closing Prayer: Loving God, thank you for giving us the gifts of creation. Help us to use them wisely and use them for your glory. Amen.

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