

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Proper 14 (A)

Old Testament: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

BACKGROUND

The Season After Pentecost is the longest season of the church year, spanning almost half the calendar year. The weeks after Pentecost are called 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 liturgical color of the season is green. It is often thought of as a season of growth both in our personal faith and in the life of the church. Common themes to focus on throughout the season are:

- Our relationship with God.
- Our relationship with Jesus Christ and with one another through our prayers, the sacraments and life in the body of Christ.
- The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- The Church and its work for God’s mission.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK’S READING

We continue the saga of Jacob’s family today with the story of Joseph and his brothers. There was much jealousy among the brothers because of who their mothers were and their place in the family. Joseph’s brothers were very jealous of him did not approve of his dreams that tell of his greatness (which we don’t read today, but you could paraphrase for the children.) Joseph’s brothers decide to sell him rather than kill him to get rid of him.

THEME

Family and Feelings

BEFORE CLASS

You will need cloth for prayer space, Children’s Bible with the Joseph story, and a candle. You will also need art supplies, a bowl or jar with various feelings (happy, sad, angry, worried, etc.) written on separate pieces of paper.

Prepare your prayer/gathering space with a small table, or a piece of cloth, it could be green or colorful depending on your traditions. On this cloth place a candle. Near your prayer space place the cloth or paper for weaving.

BEGINNING

Gather the children together at the prayer table and ask some wondering questions.

- I wonder what it is like to be a part of a big family with lots of brothers and sisters.
- I wonder how all of the brothers and sisters feel when the mom or dad or grandma or grandpa spends time with just one of the children.
- I wonder if the brothers and sisters ever get angry with one another.
- We are all part of a family, it may have two people or six or more. We are all part of a larger family - God's family.
- What changes have they noticed in the room? What colors should they look for in the main Church? We are now in the season of growing or ordinary time. We hear stories of the family of God and how we are all a part of this story.
- I wonder how big God's family might be.

OPENING PRAYER

Light the candle. Have the children repeat each line of the following prayer:

For family, we thank you God.

For our home, we thank you God.

For the people in our church, we ask you to be with them.

For the people outside of our church, we ask you to be with them.

For God's family, Amen.

After the gathering/opening prayer time, you can move to another space in the room for storytelling. It allows the children to move and stretch and renew their focus on the story. Gather together for your story.

THE STORY: GENESIS 37:1-4, 12-28

In the Bible we hear stories of many families. These families are just like ours, they love each other and sometimes the children don't get along, or get mad at each other. We tell these stories to remind us that we are all a part of the story of God's family. This story is best when read this story from a Children's Bible. If you cannot find a children's Bible, try to find a simplified version of this story for the young children to understand.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

After reading this aloud, ask the wondering questions:

- I wonder why the brothers didn't like Joseph.
- I wonder what God wanted us know when Joseph was sold to be a slave.
- I wonder how Joseph felt when his brothers were not kind to him.

ACTIVITIES

These options can be done within your same space or a separate area. Encourage movement after the storytelling.

Option 1: Family Robes

Just as Joseph was given a robe, today we will create your own robe that tells a story. Invite the children to create a “robe” for themselves that tells a story about themselves and their family. (It can include their favorite colors, the favorite colors of their family members, pictures of pets, where they live, etc.)

When the children are finished with their creation, gather in a circle and invite them to share if they wish.

Option 2: Musical Chairs

Just as Musical Chairs you will play the song – “Joseph’s Coat” from *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at short intervals. Encourage the children to move and dance as they listen to the words and music.

When the music stops, as the leader you will choose a feeling. The children will ‘freeze’ and create the face, or body movement that best describes the feeling.

Continue until you have gone through your feelings list (feel free to repeat some of the feelings). Then gather the children in a circle and ask the following:

- What feelings did you like to pretend the most?
- What feelings didn’t you like to pretend to do?
- Who can help you with your feelings?
- How can we ask God to help us with our feelings?

GETTING CLOSURE

Gather the children together in a circle in your prayer area.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, God, for feelings and having us all be part of your family. Amen.