

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children

Proper 19 (A)

Old Testament: Exodus 14:19-31

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

The Israelites have fled Egypt, headed toward the Red Sea and are being led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. As they flee, Pharaoh’s heart is hardened once again (as God foretold) and he sends 600 picked chariots and other chariots with Egyptian officers after them. As the Egyptians close in on the Israelites, they begin doubting Moses and what God had told him to do. Moses tells them ‘Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.’ Then God tells Moses what to do to escape the Egyptians.

This is a plan by God so that the Egyptians will see God’s power and his might. The lead up and crossing of the Red Sea puts the power in God’s hand even though there are thousands of Pharaoh’s men following them in chariots with whips. Their power is useless against God’s power. This is an amazing reversal of the power that the Israelites had known, and they come to have faith in God.

THEME

Parting of the Red Sea

BEFORE CLASS

You will need brown cardboard or brown construction paper, blue paper, toilet paper rolls (or paper towel rolls cut in half or thirds), printed person and fish (see below), markers or crayons, glue or glue sticks OR props to reenact the story and possibly different versions of the Bible from which to read. Precut the blue paper and roll the edges. You may need to precut the people and fish for the children as well.

BEGINNING

Spread a blue sheet or blanket on the floor in front of the area that you are going to use to tell the story. Have the children gather around and wonder with you what the blue sheet or blanket might be.

OPENING PRAYER

God of Grace and Wonders, we come before you today to learn about the miracle at sea that you commanded Moses to perform to save the people of Israel. Open our hearts that we can hear your works and come to know your incredible power.

THE STORY: EXODUS 14:19-31

In the Bible we hear stories of many people. These people are just like us, they eat and sleep, go to school and work. God has a plan for each of them, and in hearing the stories we learn that God's plan is for each of us too.

Read Exodus 14:19-31 from a Bible or Children's Bible.

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army

of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Parting of the Red Sea Craft

You will need a brown piece of construction paper or cardboard, blue paper and the printed sheet below for the children to color. Using the Sheet at the end of the lesson, have each child create his or her own Red Sea creation. You may want to create a good number of copies of the person image so they can create a group of Israelites or the Egyptian army. You can also create a large scale model and have the children act the story out once they have all created their own person or people to cross the Red Sea.

Activity 2: Reenact the Story with Props

Note: You may want to use a more contemporary version of the text for this such as The Message.

You can reenact the story as it is written or you can have the children create a skit from this story as if it were happening today. How would it be different? What body of water would Moses part? Etc. If you have enough, you can split them into two groups to create their skits and then have them come back together and do the skits for each other to see what they came up with in their groups.

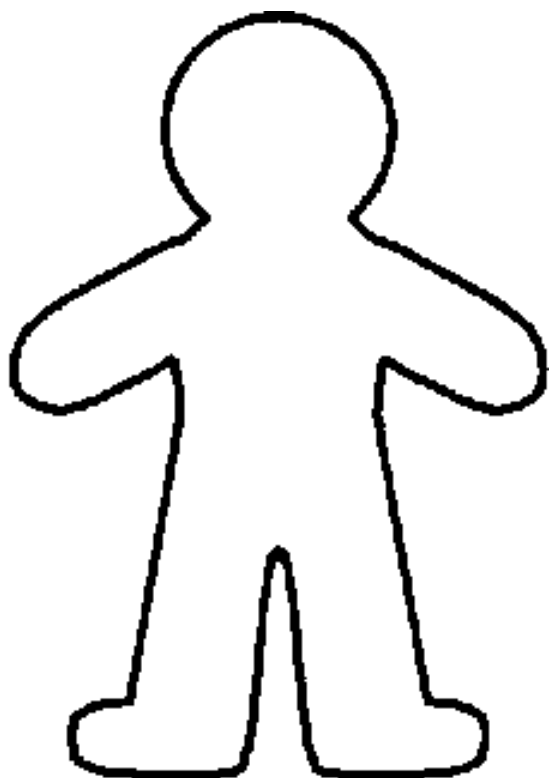
To help with the reenactment, it is good to have some props for the children to use such as 2 large sheets of fabric to make the blue water, a brown piece of fabric for the land below the water, a staff for Moses, some costumes (or fabric, towels or sheets that can be draped on to the children for costumes), some cotton or white fabric to make the clouds, fans for the wind, and maybe some fish cut out from paper or stuffed animals that would appear in the sea if it parted.

GETTING CLOSURE

Gather the group back together and have the children share their art creations OR ask them what it felt like to act out or “be” parts of the story. As you have snack together, wonder again with them what it would be like if this were to happen today. Would they walk across the dry land? Would they do as God told them as Moses did?

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God, we gather as your people once again to give thanks for your mighty works. Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world around us that we might come to know you in new ways each day. Bless us as we go forth into the world and keep us safe until we gather together again. Amen.



Take a sheet of brown paper or cardboard and place it on the bottom.

Take the blue paper and cut it down the middle and then cut one-inch strips along two edges. Curl the paper up by rolling it around a pencil or crayon.

Glue the blue to the brown leaving a pathway in the middle.

Color and decorate the person and the fish. (If you want the children to have a whole group of Israelites, give them more of the cut out figures.)

When the figures are done, glue or tape them to the toilet paper roll so they will stand up and “walk across the sea on dry land.” Cut out the fish and glue or tape them to the scene.

