

Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Exodus 32:1-14

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.

Notation for this Scripture

Moses has been on the mountain with God for 40 days and nights which means that the Israelites have been without either of their leaders. In their anxiousness they turn to Aaron who helps and encourages them create a calf and then to have a festival. As God sees what they are doing, God becomes angry and wants to get rid of them. Moses, however, steps in and asks for God’s mercy, quoting God’s promise from Genesis. This is a great risk for Moses, as he asks God to turn away from anger and remember the promises that were made to the people. God changes his mind and does not burn wrath upon the people.

Theme: Focus on God Our Creator

Before: You will need paper, magazines, markers, crayons, glue, scissors, and craft supplies. You will also need copies of the prayer cards if you are going to use them.

Prepare:

Activity 1: Lay out the supplies beforehand thinking about what supplies you might want to have out for children to create their images of God. You can create stations for them, or just have the supplies out and they can come get what they need. OR Activity 2: Copies of the prayer cards or pieces of paper to create their own prayer cards. It might be good to punch a hole in the top of the cards so they can be strung together and not lost OR to rubber band them together for the children to take home.

Beginning: Welcome the children into the room and have them sit in your gathering area. Ask how their week was and what they had for dinner the night before or breakfast that morning.

Opening Prayer: *Almighty God, we thank you for this morning, for our time together. We ask you to be with us as we gather to hear your word. Be with us as we learn more about you and how to stay close to you no matter what is going on around us. Amen.*

The Story:

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 32:1-14.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder why the Israelites built a golden calf and worshipped it after all God had done for them.

- I wonder why God was so angry at the Israelites.
- I wonder why God's mind was changed by that Moses said.

Allow time for response

Introduction to Activities:

Last week when we talked about the Ten Commandments, the rules God gave us so we can be in relationship with God and with one another. The Israelites had heard these and yet, when Moses had been gone for 40 days and nights on the mountain talking to God, they began to worry and become anxious. They panicked a bit and asked Aaron what to do. They went back to what they had known before God had freed them from Egypt by building a golden calf, a false God, to worship. Sometimes we make mistakes when we feel that we are far from God, or when we don't spend enough time with God. Sometimes we can even put things in the place of God as the Israelites did today.

I thought it would be good for us to create things that will help remind us of God's love for us, that God is never far from us, and that God is only a prayer away.

Activity 1: Images of God

The children will Create pictures or a collage of what God means to you.

The Israelites got into trouble with God because they turned to something other than God in their time of need. We don't want to fall into the same trap and get caught up in things that take us away from God. We are going to spend some time today creating pictures or collages of things that are images of God for us. In the Bible, we hear God referred to as the light, a rock, a foundation, a pillar of fire, a cloud, a still small voice, etc. Think about what images remind you of God.

Use the supplies to create something that will remind you of God's love and presence in your life.

Activity 2: Prayer Cards

Sometimes when life gets a little crazy, it can be hard for us to remember to focus on God and to

pray to God for help. Today we are going to create prayer cards. These are a way for all of us to remember that God is just a prayer away. It does not matter what words we use, or even if we use words at all. What matters is that we spend time with God.

You can either have the children create their own prayer cards with pictures and words and/or you can use the cards below that have graces and prayers on them for children to take home and use with their families. The cards below should fit onto business cards, so if you have some laying around, use them to save on cutting time.

Closure: Invite the children to clean up the space and gather together. Once everyone is gathered, invite them to share what they created today.

Closing Prayer: *Gracious and merciful God, thank you for the gift of your servant Moses. As we leave this place may we remember that you are never far from us and that all we have to do is remember you and pray that you will lead us through our lives. Be with us and bless us with your spirit. Amen.*

Exodus 32:1-14

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD." They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation."

But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, "O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the

earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Written by The Rev. Shannon Kelly

Thank you Lord for giving us food Thank you Lord for giving us food For the things you said For our daily bread Thank you Lord for giving us food. Amen. <i>(sung to the tune of Superman)</i>	Bless our friends, bless our food Come oh Lord and sit with us May our hearts glow with peace Come oh Lord and surround us. Friendship and love may it bloom and grow Bloom and grow forever Bless our friends, bless our food Bless us all forever. <i>(sung to the tune of Edelweiss)</i>
Come Lord Jesus, be our guest, May this food by thee be blest, May our souls by thee be fed, Ever on the living Bread. Amen.	Ooooh the Lord is good to me, and so I thank the Lord, for giving me the things I need, the sun and the rain and the apple seeds! the Lord is good to me. Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen. AAAAMEN <i>(sung to the tune of Johnny Appleseed)</i>
Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. <i>Book of Common Prayer, page 132</i>	Give us, O Lord, thankful hearts which never forget your goodness to us. give us, O Lord, grateful hearts, which do not waste time complaining.
We thank Thee, Lord, for happy hearts, for rain and sunny weather; We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food, and that we are together.	Lord Jesus, be our holy guest, our morning joy, our evening rest, and with our daily bread impart your love and peace to every heart.
Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen. <i>Book of Common Prayer, page 124</i>	BLESS THIS FOOD TO OUR USE AND US TO YOUR SERVICE. KEEP US EVER MINDFUL AND RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.