

Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Exodus 33:12-23

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

Today’s lesson comes after the story of the Golden Calf from last week. Following on the heels of that story, we hear and exchange between God and Moses about God’s role in their lives and in the rest of their journey. Moses continues to intercede on behalf of the people of Israel and remind God what God had told them in the past. We hear that Moses wants a better understanding of how God works so he can serve God better and have a deeper relationship with God. Moses asks God to be made clearer so he might better understand how best to follow God and therefore how to be a better leader. Finally, Moses asks to see the glory of God to deepen the relationship and be filled with God’s presence and love. As God passes by Moses, he cannot see all of God, but only where God has been. We as

humans never see God at work, but only where God has been, only where God was. Those “God moments” are evidence of where God has been in our lives in order to deepen our faith and understanding in God.

Theme: God’s Presence in Our Lives

Before: You will need a large roll of paper (like butcher paper), arts and crafts supplies, tissue paper, glue, scissors, markers, and crayons.

Prepare:

Activity 1: God Mural: Roll out the sheet or sheets of paper to the length that you want them and precut the paper. Have the materials out and ready for the children to use. OR Activity 2: Have the art supplies and paper out for the children.

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 and loving God, we thank you for bringing us together today to learn and discover more about you. Guide us as we learn that we may find you in new and exciting ways. 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 33:12-23.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder why Moses asks these things of God?
- I wonder why Moses couldn’t see all of God, face to face?

- I wonder what it felt like for God to pass that close to Moses?
- I wonder if any of you have ever felt God or seen God?

Allow time for response

Activity Introduction:

We have heard and talked about how God's presence is felt with Moses and in our own lives. We are going to take this opportunity to reflect on where God is in our lives, how we experience God and how we sometimes know that God is near.

Activity 1: God Mural

Have the children create murals (either to stay in their space or to take home) of where they have seen or felt God in their lives. This could be pictures of when they have felt God, how they have felt God, when they see God, etc. Give them lots of creative materials to work with so they can be as creative as possible. You can ask questions to help them discover where God has been present in their lives, for example: Have you ever felt God when you were outside playing, when you were with family, when you were with friends, when you were alone, when you were praying, etc. What did that feel like, what did that look like, how did you feel in that moment, etc. They do not need to answer these questions out loud, but more to themselves as they figure out how they want to depict God's presence in their lives.

Option 2: God Knows us By Name

God knows us by name and shows us God's presence in many ways. Create a Name banner that will remind you of how God makes God's presence known in your life.

Take a sheet of paper and write the child's name down the side. Then, for each letter, draw how God makes is presence known to you. Note: If a child has a short name, they can do first and last, first and middle, etc. Make sure

to help them write their name down the side if they need help. You can also pre-print the names of the children who normally come.

If they wish, they can make one big picture with all the things from their name, or they can do individual pictures for each letter of their name.

Name Book: To give them more room to draw, you could do each letter on a separate sheet of paper and then staple them together in a book so they have a name book.

Example using the name FRANK

- Friends – I feel God’s presence when I am with my friends. (picture of friends)
- Rainbow – I can see God’s presence in the rainbow (rainbow)
- Ants – Remind me that God is busy at work even if I can’t see it all the time. (picture of ants)
- Night – I can feel God’s presence at night, when the world goes quiet and the stars come out. (picture of night)
- Kindness – I can experience God’s presence when someone is kind to me or when I am kind to someone else. (picture of someone being kind)

You can use words, pictures, poetry, whatever you want to create our name. Share them with one another when you are done.

Closure: Invite the children to gather together and share what they have created.

Closing Prayer: *Gracious and Loving God, thank you for our time together today as we thought about you and how you are real in our lives. Be with us as we leave this place that we may feel your presence and know your love. Amen.*

Exodus 33:12-23

Moses said to the LORD, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." God said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." And he said to him, "If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth."

The LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray." And God said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The LORD'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live." And the LORD continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

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