

Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Deuteronomy 34:1-12

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

Previous to this, the people of Israel have been in a process of transition from being a people on a journey to a people entering into the land of Canaan. They are transitioning from one part of their lives to the next. Moses has given them instructions that carry forward into the book of Joshua, we hear the Song of Moses in 31:30-32:52, as Moses tells of the past and offers a vision for the future. This is followed by Moses blessing the Israelites before he departed, and finally by Moses death and burial. This is an amazing insight into God’s relationship with Moses and God’s love for Moses as servant and friend in leading the people. Moses burial site is still unknown.

Theme: Remembering and Celebrating Moses

Before: You will need copies of the Scripture, heavy paper, copies of the icons below, colored pencils, paint, markers, crayons, scissors, glue, sticks or dowels for each child, lots of different arts and crafts materials for children to create with (different colored yarn, feathers, beads, fabric, slips of paper to write upon, paints), scissors, glue, hot glue gun (to be used by the teacher)

Prepare:

Option 1: Have copies of the icon coloring pages below for each child. You may want to enlarge the icons below so the children can see some of the detail in each icon. OR Option 2: Have all the materials out for them to look through and be creative with as they envision what their leadership staff might look like.

Beginning: Welcome the children into the room and have them sit in your gathering area. Ask them if they celebrated anything this week (or month) and in what way they celebrated.

Opening Prayer: *Gracious and life-giving God, we thank you for the gift of your servant, Moses. Help us to remember all he did to serve and honor you and the people of Israel as they were led from slavery to freedom. 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 Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what it was like for God and Moses on the mountain.
- I wonder how Moses felt, standing on the mountain with the LORD whom he had longed to see.
- I wonder what it was like for the Israelites to say goodbye to their leader.

Activity 1: Creating an Icon of Moses

Religious icons are sacred images and are considered to be “prayer made visible.” Icons are important, not only as examples of early Orthodox Christian art but especially as devotional tools for prayer.

We are going to take some time creating Icons of Moses today so we can take them home with us as a prayer of thanksgiving for all that Moses did and what an amazing servant he was.

Icons have symbols and images that help tell us who that religious person was and what they did.

What would some symbols of Moses be? Allow them time to respond.

You can take some time to remember all the stories that have been covered in the past few weeks to help them create some symbols of Moses and his ministry. You can show them the icons below to help them understand how they might be put together. If they would like to trace an icon to color in, there are two samples below.

To create a modern looking icon of Moses, you could give them magazines to look through with the task of finding symbols of Moses’ ministry in today’s culture.

Examples of Symbols of Moses: Moses basket Staff Parting of the red sea
Burning bush Ten Commandments Leading People

Option 2: Leadership Staff

Moses was an amazing leader of the Israelites. We can learn a lot from how he led people from slavery to freedom, to their promised land.

We can all be leaders. Being a leader means that you are a guide for another person. As we learn from Moses, we do not have to have all the answers, we only have to ask the questions and listen.

So what are some characteristics of leadership that Moses had? Allow the children time to respond.

Examples: Characteristics of a Good Leader:

- Grounded – Moses knows where he came from and is grounded in God.
- Not afraid to stand up for others – Moses was not fearful of the Pharaoh
- Prayer – Moses spent a good amount of his time talking with God, focusing himself in prayer, asking God questions of the people.
- Listens – Moses listened both to the people and to God faithfully
- Teacher – Moses taught those around him by word and example
- Faithful – No matter what was coming his way, Moses was faithful to God and faithful to the people
- Mediator – When God got angry at the people, Moses spoke to God on their behalf
- Led by example – Moses led the people through showing them how to live a faithful life. His example taught them a great deal about how to be a good leader and how to be faithful.

One of the symbols that reminds us of Moses is his staff. Throughout his ministry, we hear about him using his staff for miracles and as an aid in his ministry. Today, as we honor his ministry, we are going to create our own Moses staffs. On our staffs, we are going to add things that will remind us of what a leader is and how Moses' life can help us become better leaders.

We have just talked about characteristics of Moses' leadership. Let's brainstorm some symbols for each of these. We can have more than one symbol for each, so be creative. Allow the children time to brainstorm.

Now it's your turn. Use the materials provided and create your own Moses staff. What symbols do you want to use? Do you want to write words on your staff? Is a certain color or material going to help you remember Moses? Be creative!

Closure: Invite the children to clean up their space and then gather them together to share what they have created.

Closing Prayer: *Almighty God, we thank you for our time together as we remembered Moses, his ministry, and his life. We ask you to be with us as we leave this place, that we may remember Moses' faithful life. May it be an inspiration to us to faithfully serve you each day. Amen.*

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negeb, and the Plain-- that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees-- as far as Zoar. The LORD said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there." Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, at the Lord's command. He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated. The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended.

Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. He was unequaled for all the signs and wonders that the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

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