

# Lesson Plans for Younger 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

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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 cardstock paper or paper towel rolls, blue, white, red, yellow and orange tissue paper, glue (not glue sticks), scissors, cotton balls, copies of the symbols or icons below, markers, crayons, and scissors.

**Prepare:**

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Activity 1: Pillars: If you do not have enough paper towel rolls (two per child), you can easily make a tube by rolling a sheet of card stock length wise and taping or stapling it to create a tube. It is best to use a neutral color of paper. Have the two kinds of pillar materials ready for the children (cotton balls, blue tissue, etc. for the clouds and red, orange, yellow for the fire.) OR Activity 2: You will need to make copies of the symbols and/or the icon coloring pages below for each child. You can also find other symbols for Moses. If the children want to, they can completely create their own icon by drawing. What is provided below is for inspiration and use but be creative and encourage the children to really create a prayer for Moses.

**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:**

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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:

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- 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.

## Intro to activities:

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Today we hear about Moses' death and burial. This can be a sad time for us as we think about someone dying. However Moses and the people of Israel knew this time was coming and had been saying goodbye and celebrating their time together for a while. Previous to this lesson, we hear Moses singing a song of their past together and bidding them a future with their new leader, Joshua. Then we hear Moses giving the people a blessing before he goes to be with God.

Today, we are going to take some time to celebrate Moses, his leadership and all that he did for the people of Israel.

## Activity 1: Pillar of Fire and Pillar of Cloud

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As a way to remember Moses leading his people from slavery to freedom, we are going to make pillars of fire and pillars of cloud. The pillar of cloud helped Moses lead the people by day and the pillar of fire by night. They are symbols of God's presence among the people as Moses led them to freedom. Fire and cloud can be symbols of God's presence in our lives as well. God burns in our hearts and lights the way in the darkness. God also guides us gently like a cloud so we may follow closely.

Give each child two tubes. You can create tubes from card stock by simply rolling them up and taping them into a tube shape. (make sure you make the tubes wide and not too narrow so they can stand up easily.)

Give the children glue, cotton balls, light blue fabric, light blue tissue paper for the pillar of cloud

Give the children glue and tissue paper of red, orange and yellow for the pillar of fire. If they twist the tissue paper, and glue the end onto the tube, it will stick out more like fire.

Other materials you could provide: pipe cleaners, streamers, pillow stuffing

## Option 2: Moses Icon Art

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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.

We have some symbols for you to cut out and use, or you can create your own icon. Take your time and allow this to be a prayer of thanks for Moses.

**Closure:** Invite the children to clean up their space and gather together to share what they 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.*

## Moses Icon Art

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Below you will find images that the children can cut out and create their own icon of Moses with symbols of his ministry. Be creative and add your own if you wish!

Included: Pillar of cloud, pillar of fire, parting of the sea, Moses' staff, Ten Commandments, Moses

### 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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