

Sunday, April 13, 2008

Easter 4

Preparation:

Read the Gospel for the day over –Acts 2:42-47 - it can be found online at <http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/AEaster/aEaster4.htm#acts> Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump out at you.

Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. If you can, print up the picture for the week from the website. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara/eastera4.htm>

<http://msssbible.com/newtestament/earlychurch.htm>

<http://children.calvarychapel.com/site/pdf/New/Curr246.pdf>

Gathering:

Materials needed:

Small table or end of one table

White candle

Bible & Bookmark

White cloth (optional)

Yellow streamers (one per person) with Alleluia printed on them

Bubble container (from previous week)

Piece of cracker (from previous week)

Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. If you have the white cloth put it down and place the candle on it. Put the Bible and the bubble container near the candle (you may want to let the children help with this). Give everyone an “Alleluia streamer” and show them the word printed on it.

Light the candle.

Explain that every time they say “Alleluia” in the prayer they are to wave their streamer around.

Pray the following prayer together:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thank you God for Jesus. Alleluia!

Thank you God for new life. Alleluia!

Thank you God for all that you have done. Alleluia!

Amen.

Blow out the candle. Have the children put their streamers back on the table. Ask the children if they ever had some news that they just had to share with someone else. What did they do if they wanted to get someone’s attention? (*Some answers might be jumped up and down, held their hand up in the air, yelled loudly.*) In today’s story they will hear about someone who had some important news to share with everyone they meet.

Story Time:

Materials needed:

A comfortable place to tell the story – on the floor with cushions or around a table

After Jesus had left his friends to go to heaven with God so many amazing things happened to them. They learned how to be leaders. They learned how to tell others about all the wonderful things that God had done through Jesus.

One of Jesus' friends was a man named Peter. Peter loved Jesus so much. He just had to share all he had learned from Jesus with everyone he met.

Peter was in the city of Jerusalem. There were lots and lots of people there. There were so many people that it was hard to see across the square. Peter looked at all the people. He just knew that he had to tell them about all the amazing acts of God in Jesus.

Peter stood up on a stool. He called out, "People of Jerusalem. Come and listen to me. I have wonderful news for you about what God has done through Jesus."

People from all over started to gather around Peter. They said, "Please tell us more."

Peter said, "God sent Jesus to us to show us how to love in God's way and how to live in God's way. Jesus lived and walked among us. He told us stories about God's kingdom. Then the leaders of Jerusalem got scared. They decided to put Jesus to death on the cross. Everyone thought that was going to be the end of the story. God had a different idea. God acted in a wonderful way. After three days Jesus came back to life. Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the one who was promised to come and share God's new life with us all. "

Peter told them many of the things that Jesus had done while alive. The people listened and listened. When Peter was done someone asked him this question; "What should we do now?"

Peter said, "Believe in Jesus. Be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

So many people came to believe in Jesus. All of Jerusalem was amazed by the followers of Jesus.

They came together everyday to pray.

Have the children put their hands together as if praying.

They came together everyday to share their food.

Have children pretend to eat.

They came together everyday to learn.

Have children pretend to look at a book.

They came together everyday to praise God.

Have children put up their hands to praise.

They came together everyday to be with their friends.

Have children hold hands with each other.

The followers of Jesus continued to learn about how God wanted them to live. They continued to bring more people to church with them. They showed all of us how to be followers of Jesus. They shared the good news with all that they met.

Response:

Idea #1: Good News Trumpets

This will be a fun way for the children to share the Good News of Easter with friends and family.

Materials needed: large pieces of construction paper, markers, strong tape, seasonal stickers, ribbons, and stapler

Instructions: Make a cone shape with the construction paper – making sure that there is a hole at one end to be able to speak through it – use the stapler or strong tape to put it together. Help the children that need it print the following words on their trumpets: Alleluia, Good News, Jesus is Risen. Let the children decorate their trumpets with the stickers, markers and by attaching the ribbons to the trumpet. When they are finished they might want to practice shouting out “Good News” with their trumpets. Have fun with this.

Idea #2: Church Invitations

This idea will help to engage the children with the idea of inviting friends and other family members to join them at church.

Materials needed: card stock, religious stickers, markers, large envelopes

Instructions: Fold the card stock in half. Write on the outside “You Are Invited” and on the inside “To Join Us At Church”. Give each child a prepared card. Explain that they are to think about who they would like to invite to join them at church. Encourage the children to make the invitations as personal as they can. You might want to include the name and address of the church and the service times as well on the back of the card. Give each child an envelope that they can use to put the cards in. One way to stretch this idea is to encourage others in the congregation to make a particular Sunday “An Invite to Church Sunday” and have the children make up a group of invitations.

Idea #3: Church Chant

With this idea the children can use their creative energies to share the Good News with others.

Materials needed: newsprint, markers, chant from the story

Instructions: Go over the chant from the story with the children. Ask them to think of different ways that the church today can share the Good News with others. Write up the ideas on the newsprint. Suggest that they think of ones that have actions that can go with them. Eventually you should see a pattern emerging. You might want to start each sentence of the chant with the same words. Have fun and be creative. If there is time they might want to share it with a larger group.

Closing:

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Place the bubble container on the table. Put a piece of cracker on the table. Relight the candle. Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

Thank you God for our time together.

Thank you God for Jesus.

Thank you God for loving us.

Amen.