

Sunday, March 29 , 2009

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Preparation:

Read the Psalm, [Psalm 51: 1-12](#), and the Gospel, [John 12: 20-33](#), for this Sunday over . 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. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yearb/lentb5.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/b/5Lent-b/A-5Lent-b.html>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/lent5kles.htm>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/lent5kart.htm>

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/troubled.html>

Gathering:

Materials needed:

Small table or end of one table

Candle

Candle lighter

Bible & Bookmark

Purple cloth

Newsprint and markers

Psalm phrases from previous weeks

Print up the following on a strip of white paper in large letters: **CREATE A CLEAN HEART IN US GOD AND PUT YOUR SPIRIT IN US.**

Seed packets of different types of seeds

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the purple cloth on the table. Have them help you place the candle and the Bible on the cloth. Place the psalm phrases from the previous weeks on the table. Have ready the psalm fraction to place on the table after the prayer.

Pray the following prayer together:

God be with us on the journey,

Jesus be with us as we learn,

Holy Spirit be with us as we grow. Amen

Hold up the psalm fraction for the children. Read it to them or have a reader in the group do it. Explain that each week during this season they will get a new psalm piece to add to the worship table.

Place the psalm fraction on the worship table. Blow out the candle. Place the seed packets upside down in front of the children. Ask them if they can tell what will grow from the seeds by looking at the back of the packets. (*Wait for their responses.*) Now open one of the packets without showing the children the front of the packet and put some of the seeds in your hand. Ask the children again if they can tell what will grow from the seeds. (*Wait for their responses.*) Then show them the seed packet and see if any of their answers are correct. Ask the children if they know what has to happen to a seed for it to become a plant. (*Wait for their responses.*) Explain that the seed has to give up being a seed to become a new plant and create more seeds. Tell the children that in today's story they will hear Jesus talking about letting go of one thing to become something new.

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Story Time:*Materials needed:*

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

Teach the children the following chant which will be used through the story:

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS. *You might want to have the children clap their hands on their thighs for each syllable as they do the chant.*

Jesus was with his friends in Jerusalem. They were getting ready to worship at the temple. It was a very special time of the year. There were some people who had come a long way for the festival. They were Greeks. They came up to Philip and said to him, "We would see Jesus. Help us to see Jesus."

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS.

Philip went to find Andrew and the two of them went to Jesus. They told him about the Greeks who wanted to see him.

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS.

Jesus answered them, "It is time for God's Son to be honoured. I have a truth to share with you. You all know that a grain of wheat stays a grain of wheat. It cannot become something more unless it dies. It needs to go in the ground and stop being a seed. Only then will it become a plant and create more wheat. So it is with your lives. You must give them up in order to have the life that God wants for you. If you serve me then you serve God and God is honoured."

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS.

Jesus continued to speak to his friends, "I am feeling very troubled. Should I say, 'Father save me from what is coming?' No I cannot say that. It is why I have come into the world. Father honour your name."

All of a sudden a voice was heard by everyone. A voice that came from heaven and said, "I have honoured it and I will honour it again."

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS.

Jesus told those listening, "This voice came for you. Not for me. The time is coming soon when I must be lifted up. The leaders will put me to death. But that will not be the end. Remember the light has come into the world. "

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS.

The people who had been listening to Jesus were full of questions. They did not understand what Jesus was talking about. It was very confusing for them all. They did not know that Jesus was preparing them for what was coming.

WE WOULD SEE JESUS. HELP US TO SEE JESUS.

Response:

Idea #1: Heart Cookies

To have a clean heart, as the psalm suggests, is to have a heart that will follow in God's way. This response will be a creative way for the children to deal with this idea.

Materials needed: sugar cookie recipe at end of lesson and the ingredients listed there, heart shaped cookie cutter, cookie sheets, parchment paper, heavy paper plates, decorator icing – usually can be found in tubes, coloured sprinkles, plastic wrap, psalm phrase for today

Instructions: Prepare and bake the cookies the day ahead of the lesson. Bring the cookies, heavy paper plates, plastic wrap and decorator icing. Set them out in front of the children. Read the psalm phrase over again with the children. Invite the children to decorate the cookies with the icing with designs that make them think of God's spirit. When they are done decorating have the children put their cookies on a paper plate, cover it with the plastic wrap. Suggest to the children that they share the cookies with their families and talk about how God's wants clean hearts that will follow Jesus.

Idea #2: Wheat Picture

The idea of giving up something to become something new could be a difficult concept for children to process. This response will begin to give them the tools to describe the experience.

Materials needed: wheat picture at the end of the lesson, construction paper, markers, glue, scissors, seeds from one or two of the seed packets

Instructions: Copy the wheat picture and make enough copies so that each child has one. Give each child a copy of the picture and a piece of construction paper. Have them cut out their pictures and glue them onto the construction paper. Help the children to print on their picture the following: **A GRAIN OF WHEAT MUST DIE TO PRODUCE MORE WHEAT. WE MUST LET OUR LIVES GO TO HAVE A LIFE IN GOD.** Let them colour in their pictures with the markers. When they are finished colouring give each child some seeds from the packets and invite them to glue some of the seeds on the wheat heads. Encourage the children to share their pictures with their families and share the story of the wheat seed with them.

Idea #3: Communion Cards

The phrase 'bears its fruit in dying' is used regularly in communion services in Lent. These communion cards will be a way for older children to remember what Jesus had to say and share it with others.

Materials needed: communion fraction sentence – at end of lesson, card stock, seeds from seed packets at beginning of lesson, glitter, glue, markers, newsprint, scissors

Instructions: Copy out the communion fraction sentence onto the newsprint so that everyone can see it. Cut the card stock in half. Give each child two pieces of card stock. Have them print out the communion fraction sentence on their cards with the markers. Get them to glue some of the seeds onto the cards and decorate the cards with the glitter. As the children are working point out to them the similarity in the sentence to what Jesus said in Jerusalem about wheat needing to die. Suggest to the children that they keep one of the cards for themselves and give the other one to someone who comes to church with them.

Closing:

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candle. Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

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**Holy God lead us to share your love with others,
Loving Jesus lead us to be brave with others,
Holy Spirit lead us to follow as children of God. Amen.**

Sugar Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups butter, softened
2 cups white sugar
4 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
5 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt

Instructions

In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt. Cover, and chill dough for at least one hour (or overnight).
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Roll out dough on floured surface 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Cut into shapes with heart shaped cookie cutter. Place cookies 1 inch apart on parchment paper covered cookie sheets.
Bake 6 to 8 minutes in preheated oven. Cool completely.
Makes approximately 60 cookies.

Communion Fraction Sentence

This is from the Anglican Church of Canada's Book of Alternative Services (p.213) and is Sentence #7 used during Lent and Holy Week. It comes just before the distribution of the bread and wine.

Celebrant: We break this bread,
All: **Communion in Christ's body, once broken.**

Celebrant: Let your Church be the wheat
which bears its fruit in dying.
All: **If we have died with him,
we shall live with him;
if we hold firm,
we shall reign with him.**

Wheat Picture

