

**SUNDAY SCHOOL
CURRICULUM
AND
LESSON PLANS**



2nd quarter

2020

INTRODUCTION

To all Sunday School Teachers

Welcome to the second book for Year A in our Anglican series of Sunday school lessons. We hope that you find our lessons useful, interesting and inspiring.

The lessons in the first term focussed on the life of Jesus - the parables he told and the miracles He performed.

This term our focus is on our faith and on living for Jesus. We have included a lesson on the Bible, Ascension Day, Pentecost and Trinity as we celebrate these festivals during this term. Towards the end of the term we begin our study of the Old Testament.

We have, as in our first book, tried to base our lessons on the lectionary readings for a particular Sunday.

Our lessons are packed with ideas, so choose activities that best suit your class' needs and use these ideas to create a lesson that works for you! Refer to other resources for ideas as well if you are able.

We hope that you find fulfilment as you prepare your lessons and teach your children. Please do send any comments you have to tuckeyjohnson@gmail.com God bless you all!
Diocese of Johannesburg Children's Ministry

The Teachers Prayer

Lord, who am I to teach the Way
To little children day by day,
So prone myself to go astray

I teach them knowledge,
But I know how faint they flicker,
And how low the candles of my knowledge glow

I teach them power to will and do,
But only now to learn anew
My own great weakness through and through

I teach them love for all mankind
And all God's creatures,
But I find my love comes lagging still behind

Lord, if their guide I still must be,
O let the little children see the teacher leaning hard on Thee

Amen

(SANSSA)

How to prepare for a lesson

Pray for yourself, the children in your group and the lesson message.

Read the Bible to learn and understand the story and the spiritual truths. Study related Bible passages and other translations of the Scriptures.

Enrich your background understanding. Read the information for the teacher found at the beginning of each of our lessons in this manual. If you are able to, look at reference books, consult an atlas etc.

Prepare. Preferably, you should be thinking about your lesson a week before you are due to give it, so that you are able to collect the materials you need over that week. Decide how you will present the material and what activities you will do. Prepare the teaching aids and anything else needed for the lesson. It is important to plan a lesson which is not too short or too long. It is good to have a few extra activities planned should the church be running late.

Here follows a basic lesson structure you can use, although not all components are necessary every lesson:

- Welcome
- Introduction to the theme and attention grabber
- Bible reading
- Prayer
- Memory verse
- Craft
- Song
- Physical activity
- Worksheet
- Snack

Aim of the lesson. Know what you wish to accomplish during the lesson.

Reach the children. Choose the best methods to convey the message to the children. Use an age appropriate Bible. Remember that children learn best by actively doing things and exploring and discovering for themselves. Try to vary your activities from week to week e.g. try artwork activities that include painting and collage to encourage creativity.

Evaluate the lesson after teaching it. Ask yourself questions such as:

- What went really well?
- What did the children enjoy?
- What will I do the same next time and what will I do differently?

(The PREPARE idea is inspired by The South African Sunday School Association)

Curriculum

2nd Quarter 2020

	Date	Week in Church year	Lesson	Readings	Page
1	19 April	Second Sunday of Easter	Is it okay to have doubts?	Jn 20:19-31	5
2	26 April	Third Sunday of Easter	Seeing is believing: The road to Emmaus	Lk 24:13-35	13
3	3 May	Fourth Sunday of Easter	Jesus the Good Shepherd	Jn 10:1-10	22
4	10 May	Fifth Sunday of Easter	When the going gets tough (The stoning of Stephen)	Acts 7:55-60	31
5	17 May	Sixth Sunday of Easter	A walk through the Bible	Acts 17:22-31	38
6	24 May	Seventh Sunday of Easter	Leaving but more fully present. (The Ascension)	Acts 1:6-14	47
7	31 May	Pentecost	The birthday of the Church (Pentecost)	Acts 2:1-21 Jn 20:19-33 Jn 7:33-39	54
8	7 June	Trinity Sunday	Three in One (The Trinity: God is community)	Mt 28:16-20	59
9	14 June	Second Sunday of Pentecost	Children's service with liturgy and sermon A bundle of sticks		66
OR			Don't bury your talents		70
10	21 June	Third Sunday after Pentecost	Offering: giving your best to God (Cain and Abel)	Gen 21:8-21	77
11	28 June	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost	Blind obedience is dangerous. (The Sacrifice of Isaac)	Gen 22:1-14	84

Is it okay to have doubts?

Second Sunday of Easter

19 April 2020

Reading: John 20: 19 -31

Theme: faith

Memory verse: Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:39



Information for the teacher:

Today's lesson focuses on the appearance of Jesus to His disciples, particularly to Thomas (often called *doubting Thomas*), after Jesus had risen from the dead. This lesson also explores how we live a life of faith in the midst of having doubts.

Some people find it harsh that the phrase "doubting Thomas" is given to Thomas. It seems harsh and not the most fitting term. Unlike the other disciples, Thomas does not see the Risen Jesus. He (Thomas) is away when Jesus appears to the disciples for the first time. Like the rest of the disciples, Thomas had lost all hope when they killed his teacher, Jesus. Thomas knew how badly they wanted to kill Jesus. In John 11: 15-16, Thomas prophetically said that they should go with Jesus near Jerusalem so that they may die with Him. As time went on, Thomas had seen them kill Jesus. He witnessed the agony and pain Jesus felt. He saw His mother (Mary) cry near the cross...

Now, the disciples bring news of Jesus being alive! This must have been amazing on the one hand, and shocking on the other. It may be safe to say that if this happened to us, we would also have some doubts, right? Perhaps, it is out of such emotions that Thomas turns to doubt, or better yet, to conditional faith: "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 20:25).

This Gospel story highlights the importance of proof in order to believe. Also, it shows us that there is room for doubt in our Christian journey. We do not believe in God in a naïve way. Some people need more proof in order to believe and Jesus cared enough for Thomas to provide him with the proof he needed. Most importantly, the Gospel of John's central theme is that of faith in Jesus. So, although proof and what we can see is important, the mystery of God is beyond what we can prove or see. In this sense, when we explore our doubts, questions, pains and misunderstandings, we are led closer into faith of God. Our doubts are a useful tool for us to enter a deeper faith.

In our world today, we may not physically see Jesus. But through faith, we can experience God's love in nature, friends, family, sharing in community, works of justice and peace, etc. We can touch Jesus' wounds when we help heal the wounds of the sick, poor, lost and abandoned. In this sense, we live out the words. "blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed"(John 20:29).

Second Sunday of Easter

Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To know that Jesus appeared to His disciples after He had risen from the dead
- To be aware of our own questions with regard to our faith.
- To feel it is OK to question what we believe as this can grow our faith.



Attention Grabber:

We will use the Attention Grabber for today as an opportunity to remind the children of some of the bible stories they have learnt and ask questions about them.

Make true and false statements e.g. the animals went in three by three into the ark (False); Jesus was the son of John (False); Peter was the disciple who walked on water (True) etc. When a statement is incorrect the children shout “No way!” and when correct shout “Yes way!” End with the statement “Jesus is alive”, to which they should of course respond, “Yes way!”

Mention that today we are going to learn about someone who didn’t believe that Jesus had risen from the dead and was alive.



Bible Story: Doubting Thomas (John 20: 19 -31)

Start the story by asking:

- What holiday have we just celebrated? (*Easter!*)
(Briefly review the Easter story with the children - Jesus died on the cross and His body was put in a tomb. On the Sunday morning after He had died some women went to His tomb and found that it was empty! Jesus was alive!)
- That evening (Sunday night), Jesus appeared to His disciples. All the disciples, except one, were in a locked room together, when Jesus appeared to them.
- Jesus said “Peace be with you.” (*When do we hear those words in Church?*)
- Jesus showed them His hands and His side. Why do you think He showed His disciples His hands and His side? (*Jesus showed His friends the places where He had been hurt to prove that this was really Him.*)
- The Disciples were overjoyed when they saw Jesus.
- Unfortunately one of the Disciples Thomas was not with them.
- The Disciples tried to tell Thomas about Jesus appearing to them. Did Thomas believe that Jesus was alive? (*No*)
- Thomas doubted what they said. What does “to doubt” mean? (*It means that you don’t believe that something is true*)
- He would not believe them. He said, “Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my

finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

- Those were pretty big words! What do you think you would have said? If you were Thomas, would you have believed that Jesus was alive? *(Wait for answers)*
- A week later, Jesus appeared to all of the disciples. Thomas was there this time.
- Jesus showed Thomas His hands and His side and Jesus said to Thomas, “Stop doubting, and believe.”
- Thomas believed! Thomas said to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” He didn’t doubt any more, because he had seen with his own eyes that Jesus was alive. He had seen Jesus’ hands where the nail marks were and His side that had been stabbed while he was on the cross.
- We can believe too! Do you believe that Jesus is alive?



Discussion:

- ***Do you think Jesus had holes in his hands?***
- ***Is it fair to call Thomas ‘doubting Thomas’?***
- ***Do you need proof that God exists? What proof would you need.***
- ***Why do we believe that Jesus is alive?*** *(Wait for answers. Can include that: the Bible tells us so, we experience the love of God through friends and family, we see God in nature etc.)*
- ***What else does the Bible tell us i.e. what else do we believe?***
(Wait for children to make a few suggestions and give them a few hints to guide them. Some things that we as Christians believe are: God made the world; Jesus is His Son; Jesus died and rose again; Jesus is with us; God loves us; God sent us the Holy Spirit to be with us everyday)

Is it okay to have doubts? *(Wait for answers. Can include that: doubting is not a bad thing. Sometimes our doubts and questions allow us to grow in faith and understanding.)*



Prayer:

Let’s pray and thank God that Jesus is Alive.

Dear God,
Thank you for making this world
Thank you that you sent your son Jesus to die for us on the cross.
Thank you that He was raised from the dead.
Thank you that Jesus is alive again!
Thank you that Jesus is with us.
Amen



Crafts:

These crafts remind us that we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Choose the ones that you like from the following ideas.

- A picture to colour of the resurrection scene at the end of this lesson.
- A picture of the stone to be placed in front of the tomb can be found at the bottom of this page. It can be fastened to the tomb in the resurrection picture by a tack, so that it can open and close the tomb.
- Draw your own picture of the resurrection. Try and imagine what the resurrection was like and draw a picture. Think about who was there, how they felt, were there animals celebrating and flowers and angels as well as Mary and the other disciples.
- Children trace around their hands which are put together, flat on the paper to make a heart shape. A bible verse can be written on the heart.



- Another idea is to make an Easter Garden as shown in the diagram below. Objects such as small rocks, sand and plants can be used. The small rocks can be used to make the empty tomb. A cross can also be added to the scene to remind them of the entire Easter story. Each child can make their own gardens on paper plates to take home or the class can work on one garden which can be put in a place for parents to see.



Snack: A hollow Easter egg. Explain to the children that the hollow Easter egg reminds us that the tomb was empty on Easter Day. Jesus is no longer dead – He is alive!



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To know that Jesus appeared to His disciples after He had risen from the dead
- To know what is meant by faith
- To know what we believe as Christians and that we have doubts.



Attention Grabber:

Each member of the group makes a statement about themselves. The statement can either be true or false. After each statement, the group votes on whether the statement is true or not. Besides helping your students to get to know each other a little better, this activity enables you to point out that it is not always easy to know if someone is telling the truth or not.



Bible Story: Doubting Thomas (John 20: 19 -31)

Put the story into context. This story happened on the evening of the first day of the week after the crucifixion i.e. the evening of the day that Jesus rose from the dead.

Look at the younger group lesson if you need more help with telling this story.

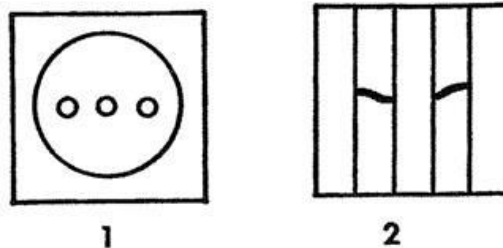


Discussion

- What is meant by a *doubting Thomas*? *(It is someone who doubts something; who does not believe what he has been told until he sees it for himself or is given proof)*
- Have you ever doubted something or someone? *(for example, you doubted that your friend was telling the truth)*
- Thomas did not fully believe what Jesus had told him before He had died – he did not believe that Jesus would rise from the dead. Do you have doubts about God – that God is really there?
- If you were Thomas, would you also doubt Jesus rose from the dead?
- How do you explore your questions of doubt and uncertainty? *(speaking to our priests, teachers, elders, reading books, even watching some shows. Never forget to pray about what's in your heart.)*

- Is it okay to have doubts? *(Absolutely! Our doubts allow us to ask the questions and enter a deeper faith. This may take time. It is not always a quick process. But the goal is not for us to run away from our faith, but to stay and ask the uncomfortable questions. To lay our doubts and worries before God. This may allow God to work in our lives and open our eyes to God's presence in the world. We may in some ways touch and see God's love in loving others, experiencing nature, working for justice and equality for the poor, sick and outcasts).*
- What is the meaning of faith?
(In Hebrews 11:1, scripture teaches that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
It is what we believe without seeing. Faith is trusting God to explain the things you don't understand yet. You can tell the children: we know we have minds, because we can think and have imaginations, but we cannot see or touch our minds, but we still know its there. In the same way, we cannot touch or see God, but we can experience God through the church, nature, family etc. This is how we have faith. Even when we don't understand, we still trust that God is there, and God is on our side working our greater good).
- What else can you do to deepen your faith?
(Persevere in your walk with God and faith by reading the Bible, praying, going to church and spending time with other Christians, asking questions, attending workshops, reading books about issues that concern you, so that you will start to walk closer with God, and the truth will slowly be revealed to you.)

Challenge your students to figure out what the following drawings represent:



You'll get a variety of answers, but the correct ones are:

Picture 1 – a three year olds birthday cake

Picture 2- A snake seen through prison bars.

Once told what the pictures are, it is so obvious and so it is with faith. It is not always easy to understand our faith or to believe what we believe, but with time, it becomes clearer.

- What are some of the other truths that Jesus told us about Himself (and God) i.e.

what do we believe?

(Allow the children time to answer this question. Some points that they mention should include: God created the world; God's son is Jesus; We believe in the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; God sent His Son Jesus into the world to die for our sins, so that we may have eternal life; On the third day after He died, Jesus would rise again, God loves us)

- What we believe as Christians is summed up in the Creed. There are a number of different Creeds. Today we will focus on the Apostles' Creed but you could use the baptismal creed. As you read out the creed, encourage those who know it to join in with you. If the children have questions about the creed encourage them to ask them. You could say something like, "I wonder if God is like our mother as well as our father?" or "I wonder what it means that God is almighty?" Encourage I wonder questions?

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to hell.

On the third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.



Worksheet: The Apostle's Creed. The children can fill in the missing words on the worksheet provided and then perhaps decorate with appropriate pictures e.g. a picture of the world to represent God, the creator; a cross to represent Jesus and a dove to represent the Holy Spirit. This worksheet could perhaps be added to their Bible as a reminder of what we believe (Creed fill-in sheet provided below).

The children could also write their own statement of faith. It will be good for them to think what they believe.



Song:



Prayer:

Use the ACTS form of prayer. (A: Adoration, C: Confession, T: Thanksgiving, S: Supplication or prayer for yourself and others) Encourage the children to add their own prayers, especially based on what has been discussed this lesson.

Here are some ideas to add to the prayer:

Praise God for the beautiful world around us. Thank you, Jesus, for appearing to your disciples after you had risen from the dead. We pray that our faith will be stronger every day. Thank God that Jesus is alive and with us today. May we live in love and faith in you. **Amen.**



Just for fun!

Guess whether the following statements are true or false. The teacher can keep a record of who makes the most correct guesses:

1. Penguins can smell toothpaste from several miles away. (False)
2. In Tokyo, Japan, a bicycle is faster than a car for trips of less than 50 min. (True)
3. M&M's were once candy-coated peas during a chocolate shortage. (True)
4. You are more likely to be stung by a bee in windy conditions. (False)
5. The Irish like Thomas the Tank engine so much that they have put faces on all their trains. (False)
6. They have square watermelon in Japan because they stack better. (True)
7. Your pet goldfish can outlive your cat and dog. A goldfish can live to 40 years. (True)
8. If you put all the earth's ants in 1 pile, and all the earth's humans in another pile, the pile of ants would be bigger. (True)
9. Matches were invented before lighters. (False)
10. An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain. (True)
11. Leonardo Da Vinci invented the scissors (True)
12. Polar bears are left-handed
13. Your finger nails grow faster than your toe nails (True)

Feel free to add any more of your own questions

References:

The School Zone, John Duckworth; Victor Books, 1986, pg 81 and 82

Life Application Bible, New International Version, Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishers, 1991

The make and do Bible, Gillian Chapman, Lux Verbi.BM

www.SundaySchoolCenter.com

www.craftingthewordofgod.com

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the father almighty,

Creator of _____ and earth.

I believe in _____, God's only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the _____.

Under _____ He was crucified,

died, and was buried.

He descended to the _____.

On the _____ day he rose again.

He ascended into _____

and is seated at the _____ of the Father.

He will come again to _____ the living and the dead.

I believe in the _____,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of _____,

the forgiveness of _____,

the _____ of the body,

and the life _____.

Amen.



Seeing is Believing: Road to Emmaus

Third Sunday of Easter 26 April 2020

Readings: Luke 24: 13-35

Theme: Jesus is with us

Memory verses:

- "It is true! The Lord is risen." Luke 24:34
- "Jesus explained to them what was said about Himself in all the Scriptures. He began with Moses and all the Prophets." [Luke 24:27](#)
- "Then their eyes were opened and they recognised Him" Luke 24:35



Information for the teacher:

After Jesus' death, two of His followers were walking from Jerusalem back towards Emmaus when a stranger joined them. It was during dinner, at the breaking of the bread and the giving of the wine, that they realised this stranger was Jesus. It was a wonderful moment for them. They were so blessed and inspired that they returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples the good news that Jesus was alive.

How is it that Jesus' followers initially failed to recognise Him? Throughout history, many prophecies were made about the One who would come to be the Saviour of the world. Jesus Himself had told them that He would die and rise again. And yet, as the followers walked along the road to Emmaus, they were deeply saddened as the one they loved had been crucified - the one who was going to redeem Israel, was dead.

It was only when the "stranger" who had travelled with them all day took the bread, gave thanks, broke and gave it to them, that they were able to put all the pieces of the puzzle in place. It was then that they could more fully understand the scriptures and the Resurrection story. It was then that they were able to truly realise that Jesus is God.

Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them – these four things mark the shape of the Eucharist. The disciples saw Jesus in the Eucharist. In the breaking of the bread they saw the risen Christ in a way that transformed them. The person they saw breaking the bread was the same one who had travelled with them on the road; the words that the stranger spoke were God breathed words – Christ was with them. They suddenly saw things for what they are – God is with us. God has broken into our world to save us, to set us free. From this perspective we can begin to discover that every moment is an encounter with God and thus every moment is an opportunity to live for God.

Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To learn to be aware of God in all things.
- To know and feel that Jesus walks with us



Attention Grabber: A picture can be found at the end of this lesson for the children to colour in. The name “Jesus” will be revealed.



Bible Story: The road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13 -35)

Dramatize the reading as follows:

On Easter Sunday, two friends of Jesus were walking to a town, called Emmaus. It was a very LONG walk on a dirt road. *(Make walking steps)* They were talking about all the things that had happened to Jesus.

While they were talking, a stranger began to walk with them. *(Whisper)* It was Jesus but they didn’t know it. Jesus asked them what they were talking about. The two men stopped. They were amazed that this “stranger” didn’t know what had happened to Jesus.

They began to explain how Jesus was arrested and nailed to a cross. Sadly, they told the “stranger” that some women went to His grave and found that the body was not there. Then, they told Him how some men went to the grave and found it just as the women said.

Then, Jesus spoke to them, explaining everything that had been written about Himself in the Scriptures.

They came to the entrance of the town and Jesus acted as if He did not plan to stop there. However, the two people begged Him to stay with them. He entered their home and sat down to eat with them. He took a piece of bread, thanked God for it, and gave it to them. *(Pretend to break bread)*

All of a sudden, the men recognized Jesus! How excited they were. At that same moment, Jesus disappeared. *(Make a surprised face or put your hands on your face like you are surprised)*

They looked around and He was gone. *(Look around—with your hand on your forehead).* They couldn’t believe their eyes.

The two men were filled with joy and excitement. They jumped up and hurried back to Jerusalem. *(Make running motions with legs and arms or huffing and puffing with your mouth.)*

They found Jesus’ friends and told them all the good news. Everyone was happy to know that Jesus was alive! They were so excited that He was alive like He said He would be. He kept His promise.

(Perhaps retell the story a second time, this time getting the kids to do the actions.)



Discussion:

- What do you think it would be like if Jesus was with us in the room right now? Would it change the words that we said or the things that we do?
- Are there times when you feel that Jesus is not with you? How do you feel at these times?
- What do we mean by always with us – how do you feel about this.
- How can Jesus be with everyone at once?
- So how does this change how we live? What should we say and do?
- How do you witness/ share the good news? (*By what you say and by way you live. Remember St Francis who said, “Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words.”*)



Physical Activity: The “Seeing” game. The two people on the way to Emmaus were not very good at “Seeing Jesus” at first. They did not recognise Him - how good are you at “seeing” things? The teacher can **do something** that the children have to “See”, and then guess what it is. Do Small motions such as a wink of an eye, move one finger, move a toe, wiggle an ear, lick your lips etc.

Explain that it is not always that easy to notice things. The disciples did not realise that the person walking with them was Jesus. (*See sermon4 kids.com: “On the Road to Emmaus” interactive group activities for more ideas*)



Craft: Make a poster, entitled “**We are walking with Jesus**”. Draw a road and let each child trace his/her footprint. Write each person’s name on their footprint and paste it on the poster. Talk about what the phrases “Walk with Jesus” or “Follow in His footsteps” mean.



Snack time: Take some bread, give thanks, break it and share with each child. Also share some grape juice. Explain that this is what Jesus did at his last meal with his disciples/special friends and that we still do this every Sunday to remember that He is our Lord. This is called communion- it is the meal we share with each other and with Jesus. Jesus also broke bread and shared with His friends the evening after meeting them on the road to Emmaus – that is how they recognised Him.



Song:



Prayer: Dear Lord, Help us to know that you are always with us, even when we don’t see you.
Help us to share this good news with our friends. Amen

Take home craft: Outline each child’s foot or make a paper footprint with the words of the memory verse for each child or “We are walking with Jesus”. Let them colour it in and take it home.



Game: See the footprints game at the end of the lesson.
(Some of the questions in this game may be too difficult for the very young children.)



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To learn about the story of the Road to Emmaus.
- To look for Jesus in the world around you.



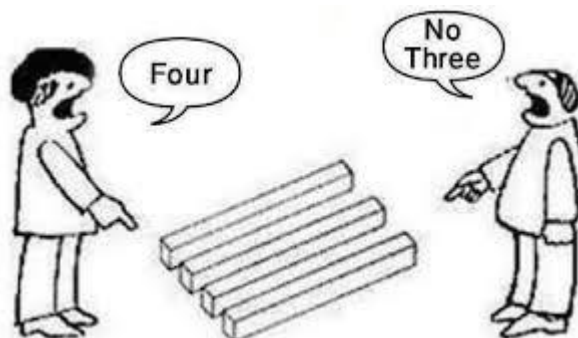
Attention Grabber:

1. Show the following pictures to the children. Ask them what they see? Talk about the fact that we don't all see things the same and that sometimes we don't see very clearly. Sometimes we do not see what is happening in a situation or we don't see when someone is upset.

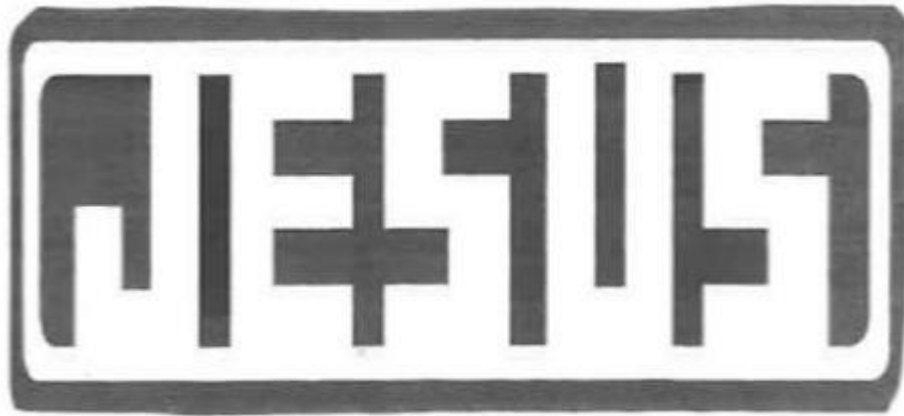
What do you see? Is it a candle stick or two faces?



How many logs of wood do you see?



What is the word below?



Today we will learn of story where the disciples did not recognise Jesus.

(You may want to make enough copies of these illusions for the children to take home as a reminder of today's lesson.)



Bible Story: **The road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13 -35)**

Read this Bible reading and then the children should try to repeat the story in their own words.



Discussion:

1. Why didn't the two believers recognise Jesus? *(What happened was not what they were expecting. The disciples were depending on Jesus to free the nation (Israel) from its enemies. When Jesus died, they lost all hope. Even though the coming of Jesus had been predicted for thousands of years and Jesus Himself told them He would die and rise again, the disciples still did not fully understand – they did not have the whole picture.)*

It is like a puzzle with lots of pieces and no picture. *(If possible, show the children a puzzle with lots of pieces.)* It would be difficult to be given these pieces, one at a time and with no picture, and understand what the finished puzzle would look like. And so, it was with the disciples. Even though Jesus told them He would die and rise again, and many prophecies were made about Jesus in the Old Testament, it was only on the road to Emmaus that they were able to put all the pieces of the puzzle into place.

2. I wonder, do we sometimes not see Jesus around us?
3. What are the times when you don't feel God near you?
4. When do you feel that God is with you?

5. The disciples failed to see Jesus for who He was. Sometimes we fail to see Jesus in the world around us. Discuss ways in which we can find Jesus in our lives and the people we meet.

Do you want to see Jesus? The Bible says, “You’ll find Him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul”. (Deut 4:29) He may not appear to you in the same way that He did to the disciples, but if you study God’s word and seek God with all your heart, Jesus will reveal Himself to you.



Prayer:

Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus
to reach out and touch Him, and say that we love Him
Open our ears Lord, and help us to listen
Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus

Dear Lord, we thank you that you appeared to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus and to Mary Magdalene and to Thomas, and to the disciples, and we thank you that these people told others of their encounter with you and wrote down their experiences, so that all may believe. Help us to see you everyday and help us to live for you and tell others of our experiences of you, so that the faith of others may be strengthened by what we do and say. Amen



Snack time: Take some bread, give thanks, break it and share with every child. Also share some grape juice. Explain that this is what Jesus did at his last meal with his disciples/special friends and that we still do this every Sunday to remember that He is our Lord. This is called communion- it is the meal we share with each other and with Jesus. Jesus also broke bread and shared with His friends the evening after meeting them on the road to Emmaus – that is how they recognised Him.



Activity idea:

- Have a number of puzzles out for the children to complete. Who can complete a puzzle the fastest? – Don’t give them the picture.
- Play a game such as hangman. Choose a word relating to today’s bible reading and lesson and the children need to try to recognize the word, just as the disciples recognised Jesus in the story for today. Words that can be used include: Emmaus, Jerusalem, recognize, Messiah,
- Another idea is to play charades. A child / one group of children need to think of a Bible scene to act out and the others need to recognise what the scene is.
- Play memory game where you have a number of objects (it can be up to 20 or more depending how good the children are at remembering – just don’t make it too hard or embarrass children who can’t remember) that the children look at for a while and then you cover them up and the children have to try and remember what they were. They can write them down or they can call them out and you bring out the objects they mention.

Foot prints

On one side of the room put up a sign that says Jerusalem. On the other side put up a sign that says Emmaus.

Instructions:

1. Make enough "feet" tracing around a foot.
2. Divide the class into two groups
3. A representative from the first group chooses a foot. The teacher reads the question and the group has to answer. If the group answers correctly then they can put the foot print on the ground, leaving Jerusalem and heading for Emmaus.
4. Then the second group sends a representative to do the same thing. If the group answers correctly they can put the foot down. The group who gets to Emmaus first will cheer on and encourage the second group until they also arrive at Emmaus.

QUESTIONS FOR THE GAME

These are all true or false questions.

1. Jesus rose from the dead on a Friday (false, Sunday)
3. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a cart (false, donkey)
4. Jesus and his disciples celebrated the last supper together (true)
5. Jesus had 14 disciples (false, 12)
6. Peter denied knowing Jesus 3 times (true)
7. Jesus was having lunch when the soldiers came to arrest him (false, praying)
8. When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem the people received him with balloons and streamers (false, palm branches)
9. Judas received 20 coins of silver for turning in Jesus to the soldiers (false – 30 pieces of silver)
10. Judas washed the feet of Jesus and the disciples during the last supper (false, Jesus did)
11. The name of the garden where Jesus prayed is "Gethsemane" (true)
12. Judas gave Jesus a hug so that the soldiers would know who to arrest (false, a kiss)
13. Peter cut the ear of a soldier (true)
14. Pilate allowed Jesus to be crucified even though he didn't find any fault in him (true)
15. Barabbas was the criminal crucified with Jesus (false, he was freed)
16. Jesus was crowned with a gold crown (false, a crown of thorns)
17. Jesus was beaten with a whip (true)
18. The temple curtain ripped when Jesus died (true)
19. Jesus' body was placed in an open tomb after he was crucified (false, it was closed)
20. The angel announced Jesus' resurrection (true)
21. After the resurrection Jesus appeared first to Peter and John (false, to Mary Magdalene)
22. After the resurrection there were disciples who walked with Jesus and didn't know it was him (true)

Application Questions

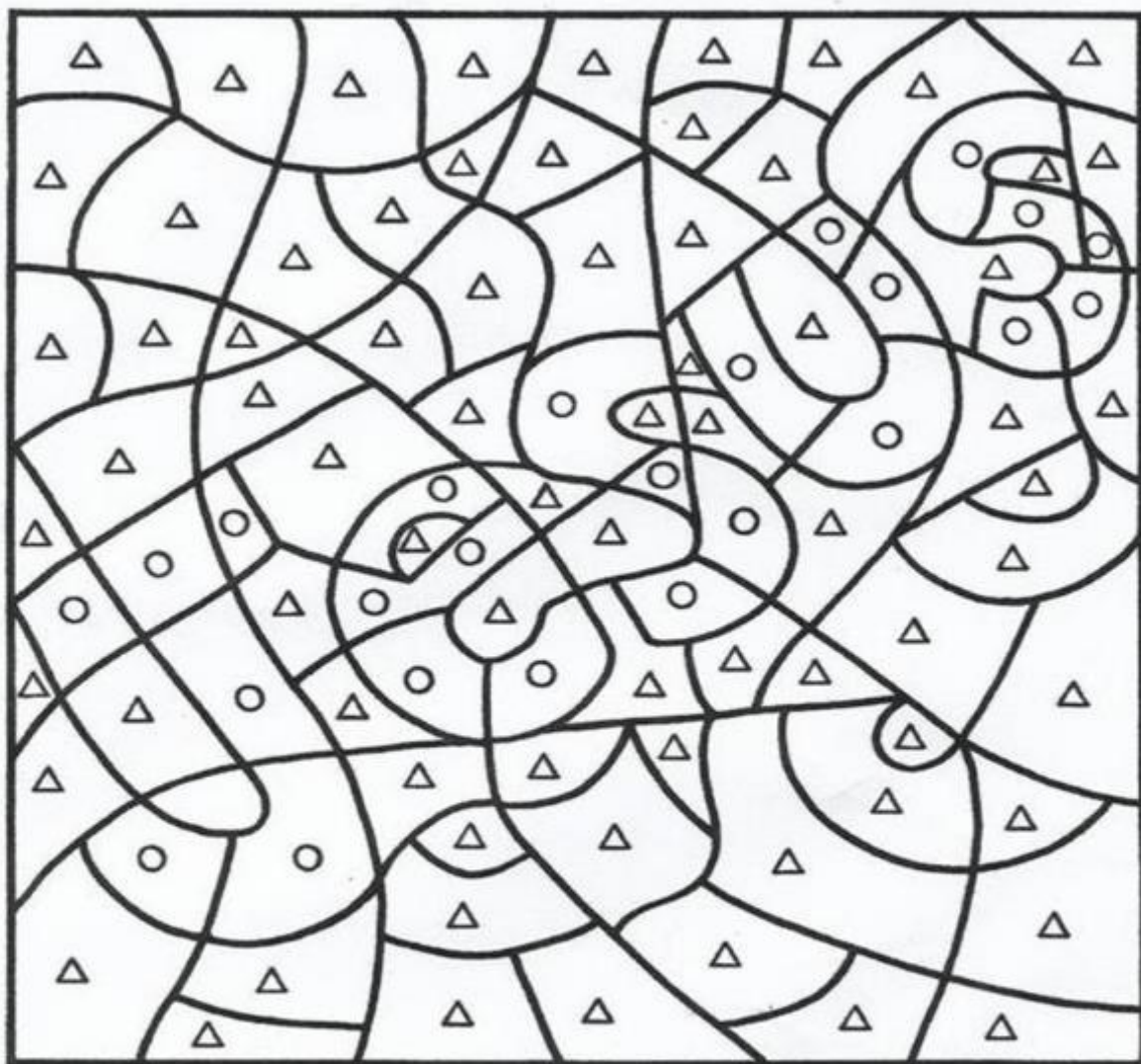
These are all open ended questions. However, the group answers – they may progress forward.

1. How do think the disciples felt when they saw Jesus alive after he had been dead?
2. Do you think the disciples were afraid when they first saw Jesus? How would you feel?
3. Why do you think Jesus was willing to die for us?
4. What do you think it's like knowing that Jesus is always with us?
5. How do you feel knowing Jesus loves you?
6. What do you think it would be like to talk to an angel?

Color the picture to find a hidden name.

Challenge Puzzle 51

○ = red △ = blue



We can thank God for Jesus by singing songs about Him. The Bible says, "How good it is to sing praises to our God." Psalm 147:1



Write the name **JESUS** on the spaces.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

Fourth Sunday of Easter 4 May 2020

Readings: John 10:1-10

Luke 15:3-7

Theme: Jesus is our Good Shepherd who helps us live the best life.

Memory verses: "The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need." Psalm 23



Information for the teacher:

The idea of shepherding is often not familiar to our modern day, urban children. Perhaps some may be aware of a man or boy looking after cattle. For this reason, the teacher should explain a little about what a shepherd does so that they children may better understand what it means when Jesus is described as our Good Shepherd.

Shepherds in biblical times faced hardship and even danger. They were outside with the sheep in all weather, enduring both heat and cold. Food was not plentiful. The shepherd had to fight off the attacks of wild animals such as lions, wolves, panthers and bears, and also had to defend himself from the attack of robbers. The shepherd might have a sling to help him do this and a staff and shepherd's crook.

Every morning the shepherd would lead the sheep from the fold. He did this by going in front of them and calling to them. He watched the sheep when they were in the fields and if any sheep went astray, he had to search for it until he found it. He knew every sheep by name. He supplied the sheep with water, either at a stream or at troughs attached to a well. In the evening he would bring them back to the fold, and check to see that none were missing. Then he watched the entrance of the fold throughout the night. He himself would, more often than not, lie across the entrance of the fold so as to prevent anyone from entering, and any sheep from wandering off into the night. Being a shepherd was challenging and required great watchfulness.

The lesson today focuses on Jesus, our good shepherd. Jesus is our loving, caring protector. He wishes us to live life to the full. He knows us and calls us each by name. However, just as Jesus knows each of His sheep, the sheep know Jesus - they listen to His voice and follow Him. Like the sheep we too must know Jesus, learn to hear His voice, listen to Him and do what He asks of us. In this way we will experience the fullness of life and as we follow his way of love new possibilities of greater joy and life open up to us.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objective: To know that Jesus is our Good Shepherd who loves us.



Attention Grabber ideas:

- Before the class starts, if possible, allow the children to play with toy lambs and sheep and sheepfold. Provide books that have pictures of sheep and shepherds or else look in the Bible for pictures of sheep. Have play dough with sheep shaped cutters, or have them mould their own. Play a recording of Psalm 23 or any other music that tells of God's love and care.
- If you have a sling, a shepherd's staff or other equipment of a shepherd, bring to class. Ask the children if they know who would use such items? Or if you can find pictures of these.
- Another option is to make use of one the ideas found in the activity section of this lesson



Bible Story: Story of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7)

Tell the story and with something like:

Sometimes sheep get scared and nervous and easily run off in fear. Other times sheep just wander off - following other sheep is what sheep do. We too can easily be led to do things that are not the best for us, things that hurt us and let us get lost and stop us from having the best life ever. We need the Good Shepherd to keep us safe and to look after us.



Discussion:

- What is a shepherd? (*Looks after sheep; cares for them if they get sick; protects them from bad things - like falling off a cliff or from wolves; makes sure that none get lost*)
- What kind of animals do you think shepherds look after? (*sheep, goats, cattle etc*) (to make it a little more fun you can ask what sounds each animal makes)
- Who is our shepherd? (*Jesus is our shepherd; we are His sheep*)
- As we heard in the story, sheep sometimes get lost. Have you ever been lost? Can you remember how it felt?
- Did you know that sheep know the sound of their Shepard's voice? When their Shepard calls them, they will come to their Shepard. When another Shepard or person tries to call them,

they won't go to that person because they don't know their voice! This is like when you parent calls you. You know their voice very well.

Do you think God has a special way of calling each of us? How do you think God calls to you? Have you ever thought how you know God is calling you?

- Have you felt God protecting you? Do you think God uses other people to protect you?
- God looks after us and protects us; God looks for us when we get lost and God brings us safely home. God knows each of us; We can trust God.
- Do you know that we are like sheep? We like to go our own way. The Bible says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way" (Isa. 53:6a). We want to do things our way instead of obeying.

Have you ever gone shopping with your mother and see something you really wanted, like a toy or something to eat? "That's too expensive," your mother said, "we can't get it today." You sit on the floor, start swinging your arms and kicking your legs and cried loudly, "I want! I want!"

Why did you act like that?

Because you wanted your own way and "wanting your own way" (instead of God's way) is sin. Everybody has sinned. All of us are like disobedient sheep; we all have gone our own way.

Without a shepherd, you and I are in trouble. We are lost in sin. We need the good shepherd, the Lord Jesus, to find us and bring us back to God.



Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus. Thank you that you care for us and look after us and love us so much. Thank you for always finding me when I get lost. Please help us to care and love others as much as you love us. We love you so much! Amen.



Craft:

- Decorate paper sheep (template provided) with cotton wool, on which the children write their names. Stick these on a picture that you can prepare beforehand that depicts green grassy hills, clean running water etc. or get the children to make a picture like this for example using finger paint or anything that you have. Add the words of the memory verse to this picture.
- Each child is given their own copy of the picture at the end of the lesson. They can then colour and add cotton wool. However, it is actually better to encourage the children to draw their own pictures of sheep – so don't worry if you can't make copies of the picture.

Or

- The children can use marshmallows and chocolate pretzel sticks to try make sheep. (See end of lesson for older children for a picture of a snack.)
- The slightly older children may enjoy making the shaking head sheep found in the older children's section.



Activities:

Many activities are listed below. Choose an activity which you think is most suitable to your lesson and your children

- **Find the sheep:** Hide and seek – children to find a number of sheep / cuddly toys that have been hidden. It is important that they find **all** of them, just as God looks for all the sheep.
- **Or Find the Lost Sheep** Hide pictures of sheep in the room. Hide one picture of a sheep with the words “The Lost Sheep” in the room and another in your shirt pocket. Have the children pretend to be shepherds and go look for the two lost sheep.

For the lost sheep in your pocket ... give “clues” as you move around the room such as “it’s on this side of the room.” Tell the children whether they are HOT (close to the lost sheep) or COLD (far from the lost sheep). Clues must only be variations of hot and cold, as in “You’re getting warmer.” Your clues will eventually contradict each other, giving away that the hidden sheep is on the move. You may have to be explicit with younger children by saying, “The lost sheep is moving!” Once the (second) lost sheep is found, the game is over.

Explain: You did a great job finding the lost sheep. What joy there is when the shepherd has found his lost sheep! He gently lifts the tired or wounded sheep close to his chest (Isa. 40:11) or on his shoulder and brings it back to the rest of the sheep.

- **Or The good shepherd and wolf game:** One child is chosen to be the wolf. Everyone else forms a large circle and then sits down. The wolf begins walking around the outside of the circle. While doing this, he will tap the head or shoulder of each child in the circle, saying “sheep” as he touches each child. When he says “shepherd” as he taps one of the children, that child must then get up and chase the wolf around the circle. The wolf tries to get back to the empty spot left by the shepherd before being caught by the shepherd. If the wolf gets to the empty space in time, the shepherd becomes the next wolf. If the shepherd catches the wolf, the shepherd returns to the circle and the wolf tries again. Relate this game to the lesson where Jesus our shepherd chases the wolf away from the sheep.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To understand what it means to have Jesus as our Shepherd
- To understand and feel the meaning of the fullness of life



Attention Grabber: Steal the sheep game

The class is divided into two teams and a line is drawn on the ground on each side of the play area. A pile of sticks is placed in a circle near each team's line – the sticks represent sheep.

The object of the game is to steal a stick from the other team's circle without being touched.

If a player is behind his own team's line, he is safe and cannot be touched by the other team. If a player is touched, he has to stay with the other team until he is rescued by being touched by one of his own team members. When one team has stolen all of the other team's sticks, the game is over. Otherwise, the team that has the most sticks at the end of the game is the winner.



Bible Reading: The Good Shepherd and His Sheep (John 10:1-10)



Discussion:

- Listen to the Bible reading. Describe what words come to mind when you hear what a shepherd has to do. *(A shepherd offers protection; looks after the weak and sick; looks for the lost; is caring and gentle; doesn't abandon his sheep)*
- How does the behaviour of a thief or a wolf differ from that of that shepherd?

Thief / wolf	Shepherd
Takes life Scatters sheep Looks after own interests Harsh and brutal Doesn't care for the sheep Does not know the sheep	Gives life Gathers sheep Looks after the Sheep Loving and caring Lays down his life for his sheep Knows each sheep by name

- Have you ever had something stolen? What did it feel like? What were your thoughts of the thieves then vs now?
- Jesus is our shepherd. He protects and cares for us so that we can have fullness of life. What does fullness of life mean? What would fullness of life look / feel like for you? *(Wait for*

children's answers; God doesn't want us to simply exist. God takes care of our needs and fears, so that we can live life to the fullest.)

- Did you know that sheep know the sound of their Shepard's voice? When their Shepard calls them, they will come to their Shepard. When another Shepard or person tries to call them, they won't go to that person because they don't know their voice! This is like when you parent calls you. You know their voice very well.
- How do we hear Jesus' voice? How do you listen to Jesus? How do you know it is Jesus who is telling you something?

Have you ever thought how you know God is calling you?

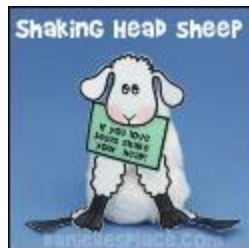
- Jesus always used examples that people would understand. Where Jesus lived there were many shepherds and people knew about shepherds. The Shepard was used because a flock of sheep would be lost and unsafe without one. We are like sheep in the way that without God we are lost and at risk of doing wrong. Ask your group if they can come up with examples like the Shepard but in today's times, eg: a soccer squad needs a coach, an aeroplane needs a pilot, a family needs a parent/guardian etc.

Jesus is described as a shepherd; how else is Jesus described? How is God described?



Craft:

- Each group makes a poster based on the lesson for today. Cotton wool and glue for the sheep can be provided.
-



What you will need: Cotton balls, cardboard, black markers, scissors, staples, glue

How to make:

1. Print out the pattern or draw your own sheep pattern and paste on to cardboard
2. Cut out the pattern pieces.
3. Glue or staple the body pattern together to form a cone shape.
4. Cut large cotton balls into smaller shapes and glue them all over the cone shape.
5. Glue the legs and arms onto the sheep's body as shown in the picture.
6. Attach the sign and the head of the sheep to the rest of the body.



Prayer: Dear Lord. We thank you that you are the good shepherd and we are your sheep. Help us not to be frightened and passive, but obedient followers, who seize the day and are wise enough to hear Your voice and follow the One who will lead us in the right places. Amen



Extra activities:

- Play the Attention Grabber game again
- **“Stuck in the mud”:** Play the game as you normally would – the wolf catches the sheep, who may then not move. The shepherd then has to go through the legs of the sheep in order for them to move again.
- See the younger children’s section for more ideas

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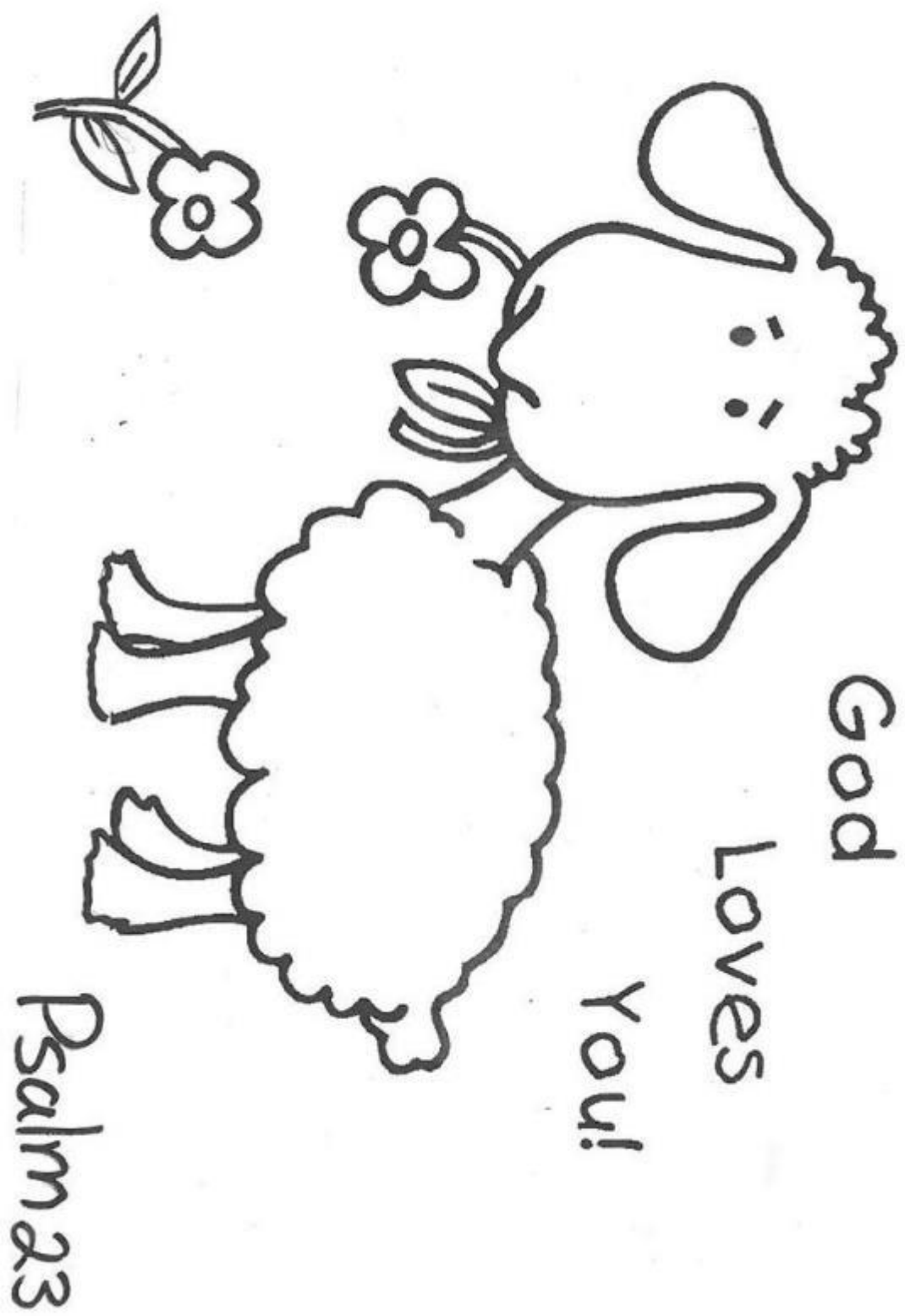
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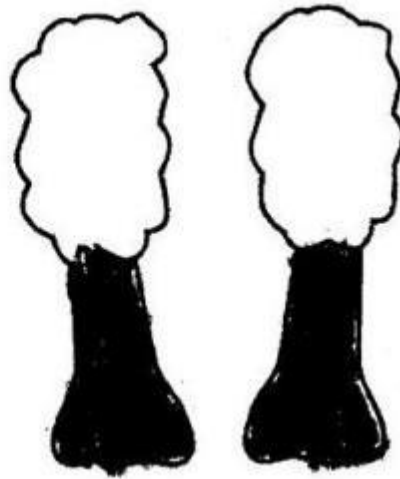
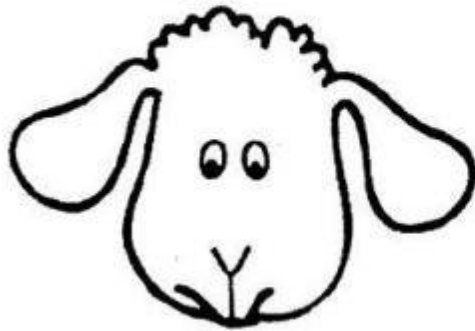
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Sheep snack idea:

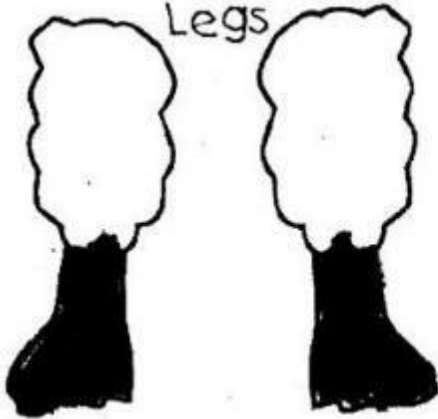




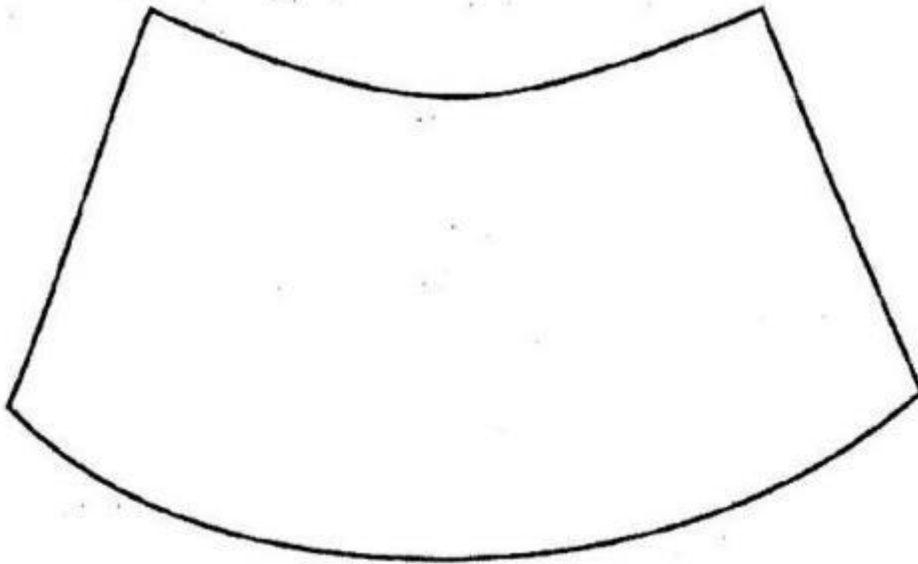


Back
legs

Front
Legs



Jesus
looks after
all His
sheep





When the going gets tough!

(The stoning of Stephen)

Fifth Sunday of Easter
10 May 2020

Reading: Acts 7: 54 - 60

Theme: God, our protector; standing firm for Jesus

Memory verses: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you" (Isaiah 41:10)



Information for the teacher

Stephen was one of the first Christians. He was full of faith and the Holy Spirit. He did great wonders and miracles among the people. But the religious leaders of the time were not happy. The early Christians were a threat to the power of the Pharisees and the leaders of the temple. The Christians had a new way of doing things, which the leaders and some members of the synagogue did not like. These people brought Stephen before the council, where they produced false evidence that he had spoken against God and Moses. As Stephen listened to their lies, he stayed calm, his face beautiful as an angel's (Acts 6:15).

Stephen tried to persuade them that Jesus was the fulfilment of God's being with people, but they would not accept what he said. The council were enraged by his words – they seized Stephen, and dragged him outside the city walls where they stoned him to death.

As they stoned him, Stephen called out to God, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" and "Lord, do not count this against them." This was the beginning of a terrible period of persecution for the Church in Jerusalem. Many Christians had to flee for their lives, wandering homeless through foreign lands.

The stoning of Stephen is a sad story which we would perhaps like to avoid. However, there is much we can learn from this story.

Firstly, we need to remember that God is always with us, even in hard times

Secondly, we learn it is sometimes hard to be a Christian and to stand firm in our beliefs.

Thirdly, the story tells us that Stephen kept his eyes on Jesus. As a result, he reflected the light of Jesus and was a witness to many.

One such person was Paul, (originally Saul), a great persecutor of the church, who witnessed the stoning and then went on to be one of the greatest missionaries of all time.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To learn about Bible stories of when God's people were in danger.
- To know that God is always with us, even when we are afraid.
- To encourage children to shine for Jesus – to always do what they know is right and good



Attention Grabber:

- Who is scared of the dark?
- Who is scared of spiders?
- What else are you scared of?
- What do you do when you are afraid?
- The Bible says, "Do not be afraid, for God is with you" (Isaiah 41:10)



Bible Story and Discussion:

Briefly look at the Bible story of Stephen. (Acts 6:8 -7:6). Use a children's bible and leave out the gruesome details if you feel this is too harsh for your class. Mention that Stephen tried to tell others about Jesus, but not everyone wanted to hear what he said. They stoned him to try to stop him.

- Look at a few Bible stories that show that God was with people when they were in trouble e.g. Daniel in the lion's den (Dan 6) and in the fiery furnace (Dan 3); Peter in jail (Acts 12: 1-11). Briefly discuss each story. In all cases, God sent an angel to look after people.

Discussion

- Think of a scary time. How did you feel? Were aware that God was with you? How did you know this?
- Do you think God was with Stephen at this scary time? *(Yes!)*
- The Bible says his face shone like an angel. (Acts 6:15). What do you think his face looked like?
- Why do you think he looked like an angel? *(He was being as God would want him to be; He was doing what was right and good.)*
- Are there situations you face today that are difficult, e.g. bullying?
- Do you think it is possible to love people that hurt you?
- How do you show love to the bully / teacher who is mean to you?
- What have we learnt today?
 - God is always with us, even when times are really tough.
 - In what ways can you try to be an angel?
 - If God is with us when we are afraid – we can work through things – we have courage and trust.

- Bad stuff still happens but we are not alone.
- We can respond in ways like Stephen did.



Prayer: Thank you for being with us when we are scared. We know that you are stronger than anything or anyone. Help us not to be afraid and remind us that you are always with us when we ask for your help. Help us to shine for you each day. Amen



Crafts:

- Make a sun or sunbeam using any material e.g. paint, crayons. This can be a group project.
-



- Make paper weights or stone pets: Decorate stones using paint. Stones can hurt us but by making them our own, they become something that no longer hurts but something that gives us strength. Remember: Be bold, like Stephen – God is with you!
- Make an angel. Stephen's face shone like an angel. We too can shine for God. Imagine what an angel looks like and draw a picture.



Physical activity:

- Play hopscotch or marbles – ask the children how they think this relates to the story for today. (throwing a stone)
- Following the leader. We need to follow Jesus, even when it's not easy. Children follow the teacher – the children line up and each child puts their hands on the person in front of them. They then do whatever the teacher does – which may not always be easy, such as hopping on one foot, crawling under tables etc.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To learn about the story of Stephen and other stories where God was with people in difficult times
- To know and feel that God is with us, even in tough times
- To encourage the children to remain firm in their beliefs
- To encourage the children to reflect the light of Jesus in their lives



Attention Grabber:

Present your class with following choices:

Would you rather:

1. Hold a non-poisonous, live snake – or eat a plateful of liver and onions.
2. Make a speech in a school assembly – or go to the dentist to get a tooth filled.
3. Climb onto the roof of a house – or let a daddy long-legs spider crawl across the back of your hand.
4. Sell raffle tickets to strangers door-to-door – or over the phone.
5. Walk through a cemetery or crypt in the middle of the night – or ask someone for a date for the first time.
6. Visit someone in the hospital – or take a test in your hardest class.

Another activity is to find things that are not nice to eat (but not poisonous). Something like in 'Fear Factor'

Or the children could be asked to put their hand in a packet with something like jelly that feels slimy.

We all fear something and don't enjoy difficult situations. Today we are going to be reminded that God is always with us, even when we are afraid.



Bible Story: The Stoning of Stephen (Acts 6:8-15; 7:1- 53; 7:54- 60).

Preferably, read from a Children's Bible for a summarised version, especially Chapter 7:1- 53



Discussion:

- Ask the children which parts of the story stood out for them
- What is a martyr? *(It is a person who dies for their beliefs)*
- Who was the first Christian martyr? *(Stephen)*
- Why was Stephen killed? *(Because he taught the people about Jesus and told people of a new way of doing things which the members of the synagogue did not like.)*
- What do you think helped Stephen keep his courage? *(His faith in God)*
- Do you think God was with him during this difficult time? *(Yes! Read Acts 7:54 to confirm this)*
- Stephen was not the only person in the Bible who was persecuted for his faith. Can you think of any others? *(Peter was imprisoned (Acts 12: 1- 11) and Daniel who was thrown into the lions den (Daniel 6) and then into a fiery furnace (Daniel 3))*

- From these and many other stories we learn that God is always with us and gives us courage and strength.
- We also read that Stephen's face looked like an angel. (Acts 6:15). Why do you think he looked like an angel? *(Children's own answers. He walked very closely to Christ. His life reflected Christ's light)*
- We are told of one particular person who witnessed the stoning of Stephen and in fact was one of the main instigators. Who was this man and why are we told of him? *(Saul was an enemy of the early Christians. He was responsible for heavy persecution of the church in Jerusalem -putting men and women in prison for their beliefs and sometimes sentencing them to death. He was later converted to Christianity on the road to Damascus and was renamed Paul. He then went on to be one of the greatest missionaries of all time and helped spread the gospel throughout the Roman Empire.)*
- We therefore learn from this that God works in mysterious ways – Stephen's death, although very tragic, was not in vain. He kept his eyes focussed on Jesus – as a result he reflected the light of Jesus and was a witness to many.
- Do you think anyone should be persecuted for their belief system...even if they don't believe in Jesus?



Application Questions:

- Do you sometimes find it hard to be a Christian?
- What would you do if someone came up to you and told you that anyone who believes in Jesus is stupid? Would you be quiet or would you tell them that you believe in Jesus too? What would you do if they laughed at you?
- If you feel strong enough to stand up for your faith, what gives you this courage?
- How can we be strengthened in our faith? *(Own answers. Read the Bible, pray, go to church, spend time with other Christians)*
- Always remember that God is with you and also be aware of the witness you are, even though you may think you don't make a difference. Remember the influence Stephen had on Saul.
- Stephen reflected the light of Jesus. How do we reflect the light of Jesus in our lives? *(Keep our focus on Jesus. Do not let anything come between us and Him)*



Prayer: Ask the children to contribute to the prayer, based on what they have learnt from today's lesson.

Finish with the following prayer:

Dear Lord God. Thank you for giving us the good example of Stephen, a child of yours who did not deny you. He was willing to suffer and die because of his love for you. Make us strong Christians so that we will never give up our faith. Amen



Worksheet: A worksheet is attached at the end of this lesson

**Craft:**

- Make paper weights: Decorate stones using paint. Stones can hurt us but by making them our own, they become something that no longer hurts but something that gives us strength. Remember: Be bold, like Stephen – God is with you! Also remember that Jesus is our rock, our cornerstone, in whom we can trust.
- Children can make a sun, decorated with glitter or shiny paper. Attach a magnet for the children to hang on a fridge. “Shine for Jesus” or “Reflect the light of Jesus” can be written on the sun. The children may instead like to come up with their own fridge magnet design and logo based on the lesson (e.g. use the angel image).



Snack: Make rock cakes. The children can take home to bake.

**Physical activity:**

- Play hopscotch or marbles – ask the children how they think this relates to the story for today.
- Towards Jesus game: Divide the children into two teams. Team 1 children can stand in a long line across the start line. Team 2 children can weave in and out around Team 1 children as they attempt to walk to the finish line without turning their faces. They **MUST** keep their faces toward the finish line without looking from side to side and letting anything come in between – anyone who gets distracted is out of the game. Switch teams and then discuss that this game reminds us to keep our eyes on Jesus and not to let anything come between us and Him.

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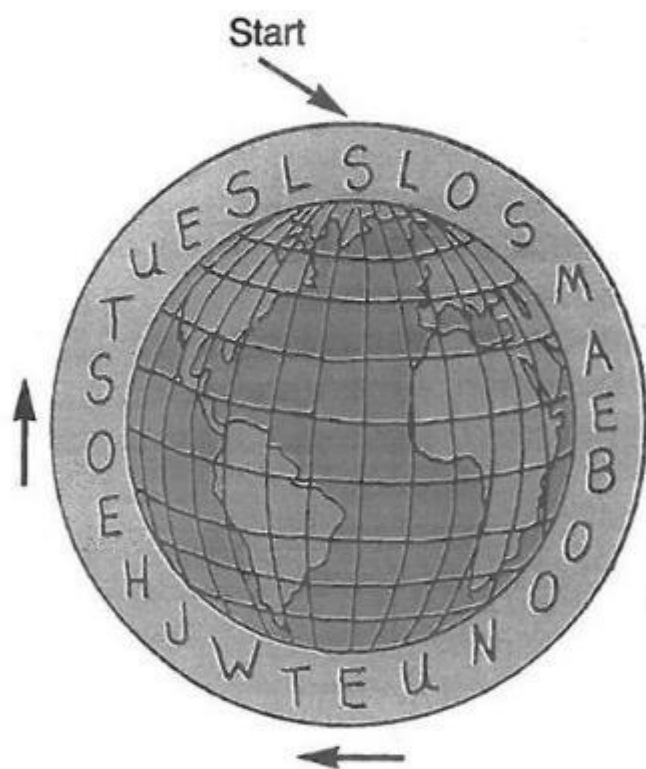
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A Witness Puzzle

To find out what a witness is, go around the world two times.
Start with S and go the way the arrows point.
Print every other letter on a line below.



S _____

_____ **S** _____

ANSWER: SOMEONE WHO TELLS ABOUT JESUS

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A walk Through the Bible

Sixth Sunday of Easter 17 May 2020

Theme: *Learning more about the Word of God*



Information for the teacher:

The Bible is considered to be a holy book by Christians and it helps us to know God and to understand our faith and to grow in faith and obedience to God. It is a very important book for Christians and we should read and study the Bible often.

This lesson will help the children to gain an overall picture of the Bible, in a fun manner! Many activities have been described in this lesson, particularly for the older children. There are too many to cover in one lesson, but select the ideas which you feel would most appeal to your age group. The activities you choose will also depend on the knowledge your group already has of the Bible. Ideas you don't use today can always be used at the end of another lesson when you have some time left over.

It is important to keep this lesson fun! There may be too much information, particularly for the older children, so judge from their reaction whether to continue with your lesson or to cut it short and then move on to an activity they will enjoy. Asking questions, rather than just telling your class the facts, can help to keep their interest, especially if you have sweets as prizes whenever someone answers a question correctly!

Hopefully, through this lesson, the children will be encouraged to read their Bible a bit more!

On You Tube there are some good videos for example, the Bible Project ones that you might like to look and maybe show to the older children.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson objective: To obtain a basic knowledge of the structure of the Bible and the stories of the Bible

Attention Grabber:

Play “pass the parcel”. The present in the middle of the parcel is a bible. Explain that this is a gift from God. It tells us about God.



Discussion:

Today we are going to learn a little more about the Bible. Do you know what the Bible is? Do you have your own Bibles?

Why do we have the Bible? *(To learn more about God and God’s plan for the world)*

What does the word “Bible” mean? *(It means “Book”. There are two main Books in the Bible – the Old Testament and the New Testament – use a Bible to show the children what you mean)*

The Old Testament is found at the beginning of the Bible and tells us about the world from the beginning of time. Who knows what the first story is about in the Old Testament? *(It tells us about how God created the world)*

(Use a children’s Bible with pictures to show the children the Creation story. Briefly allow the children to discuss this story.)

The New Testament is found after the Old Testament towards the end of the Bible and it tells us about Jesus, His disciples and the early church. It is not as big as the Old Testament. Can you think of some stories that can be found in the New Testament?



What is your favourite Bible Story? Do you think it is in the Old Testament or the New Testament? (Perhaps also page through a few stories of the Bible and discuss whether the stories are in the New or Old Testament.)

Why is It important to know the stories in the Bible? (To live as God would have us live, to know where our faith comes from and understand it better, to build a relationship with God, to know how we can apply the bible teachings in our lives)

How can you get to know your Bible better? *(By reading the Bible and coming to Sunday school.)*



Sing:

Where did the Bible come from? The Bible was written by many different people.

The first four books of the New Testament are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - (Let the children hold up 4 fingers). Matthew and John were some of Jesus' close friends – His disciples. Can you think of the names of any other disciples?

We have a poem to remind us of these four disciples which you can also use as a prayer before you go to bed at night:

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
Bless the bed that I lie on



Craft:

- Each child can draw a picture of their favourite bible story. Another idea is for each child to use play dough to depict their favourite story.



Activity: Bible quiz: Ask the children a number of questions relating to stories from the Bible e.g. what is the name of the baby who was found in the bulrushes? Perhaps have a small treat e.g. a sweet to give to a child when they correctly answer a question.



Prayer: Thank God for the Bible that tells us more about You and how we can live life to the fullest.

Some time can also be spent learning the bedtime prayer which has been discussed in today's lesson.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objective: To obtain an overall knowledge to the structure of the Bible



Attention Grabber:

Bible stack attack: Before the lesson, write the names of the books of the Bible on separate cards. As a class, or in groups, the children need to put the books of the Bible into the correct order. If you think your class may struggle with this task, don't include all the books. Don't let this activity take up too much time of the lesson.



Discussion:

(If possible, for this lesson, each child should have their own Bible)

Today we are going to learn a little more about the Bible.

Why do we have the Bible? *(To learn more about God and how we should live our lives and to get to know God better and have a relationship with God)*

Let's begin by spending a few minutes getting to know the Bible just a little bit better. Open your Bible, anywhere and read silently for a few minutes/seconds. Ask the children to share what they read. Did they recognise the story, the names of any people, or any Bible verses?

It helps to know your way around the Bible so you can find verses you are looking for. It also helps us to know about the Christian faith and what God wants for us and how we should live.

*The Bible is a collection of many stories, poems, songs and prayers. It is divided into two main books. What is the name of these two books? (The Old Testament and the New Testament)
(The word "testament" means promise. So we have the Old Promise and the New Promise.)*

Which is bigger – the Old or the New Testament? *(Old Testament)*

How many books are in the Old Testament? **39**

How many books are in the New Testament? **(27)**

(If we remember that there are 39 books in the Old Testament we can use these numbers to remember how many books are in the New Testament: $3 \times 9 = 27$!)

So, how many books in the Bible? *($39 + 27 = 66$ – get the children to do the maths!)*

The Old Testament is found at the beginning of the Bible and tells us about the world from the beginning of time. What is the first story in the Old Testament? *(The Creation story)*

Who knows the name of the first book of the Bible? *(Genesis)*

Who knows what the first five books of the Bible are? *(Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy)*

The first five books of the Bible are also known as the Pentateuch, which means "five books". These five books make up the Torah, or 'Law' which is sacred to the Jews. These first five books cover the creation of the world through to the nation of Israel. These books were traditionally thought to have been written by Moses. However, this is no longer accepted as it does not explain the many duplications and contradictions. Also Moses would have had to write about his own death and events that happened after his death. It is now widely accepted that there were different authors. This helps to explain why there are sometimes two versions of the same story. For example, there are two creation stories.* (more on this at the end of the lesson – for your interest)

Who knows which books The Ten Commandments are found in? *(Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5)*

Who can think of some stories that are found in the first 5 books of the Bible?

The next twelve books tell us about the History of Israel. They also tell us about some of the most famous women in the Bible – who can think of a few? *(Ruth, Naomi, Ester, Deborah)*

The next six books are books of poetry. The book of Psalms is used as one of the readings in Church every Sunday. Who wrote many of the Psalms? *(David)*.
Who knows how Psalm 23 starts? *(The Lord is my shepherd)*

The rest of the books of the Old Testament are called books of the prophets. Who can name a few prophets? *(Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah)* God used prophets to pass His messages on to the people of Israel, and to us!

The New Testament is found towards the end of the Bible and it tells us stories about Jesus. The first 4 books of the New Testament are known as the Gospel.

What does “gospel” mean? *(Good News)*

What are the names of the first 4 books of the New Testament? *(Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)*

The order of the books of the Gospel can be remembered by a well known bedtime prayer – refer to the younger children’s lesson for this.

The four Gospels tell us about the life of Jesus, His death and resurrection.

Each of the four writers tried to reach a different audience, so each book contains slightly different details. Matthew wrote mostly to the Jews, Mark wrote to the Christians in Rome and Luke tried to reach the Gentiles (people who were not Jews), and John wrote to new Christians. But God inspired all four Gospel writers, and what they wrote long ago was written for us too!

Which book comes after the gospel? *(Book of Acts)*

This book tells the history of the early church and is sometimes called the Acts of the Apostles because it tells how the apostles spread the good news about Jesus after His death and resurrection. Do you know who wrote the book of Acts? *(Luke)*

The rest of the New Testament, except the last book, consists of the epistles, or letters. Which of the apostles wrote many of the letters? *(Paul)*

Most of Paul’s letters were written to give advice and encouragement to new churches. To whom did he write some of his letters? *(To the people in Ephesus, Corinth, Rome etc – if you have a map of that time, you can show your class where all these places were)*

What is the name of the last book of the Bible? *(Revelations)*

Who is believed to have written this book? *(John)*

Possible Activities:

- Each child can be given a copy of the Bible Bookcase, at the end of this lesson. They can colour each type of book a certain colour e.g. poetry books can be coloured yellow. This page can be kept in their Bibles, as a good reminder of what they have learnt today.
- If you would like your children to know the order of the books of the Bible, then try this idea: Mnemonics: A mnemonic is when the first letter of each word in a sentence is also the first letter of the books you are trying to memorise e.g. “**G**o **E**at **L**ettuce **N**ot **D**oughnuts” could be used to help you remember the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Bible) – **G**enesis, **E**xodus, **L**eviticus, **N**umbers, **D**euteronomy.

All the prophets in order can be memorised with this silly sentence (or make up your own!)
Just Let Eddy Drink His Juice And Overheard John Mention Now How Zebras Have Zany Manners.

Have the children make up their own memory boosters. By the time they get the sentence figured out, they may just know all the books!

Or

Ask your children to compose a song or rap to help them remember the order of the books of the bible.



Activity

- Scripture cake recipe. The following recipe is one of many recipes that have been used through the years to test a person's knowledge of the Bible. The ingredients can be found by looking up the scripture verse. The children can perhaps take this home to do with their parents and then make! The answers to the ingredients can be found at the end of this lesson.

After your class has been introduced to the names of the books of the Bible, you can reinforce that knowledge by adapting a familiar party game. The children sit in a circle. The first child names a book in the Bible, then adds "is the word of God" e.g. "Ephesians is the word of God." The next student repeats Ephesians and then adds the name of another book e.g. "Ephesians and Genesis are the word of God", and so the game continues. If a student gets stumped, you can either help them keep going, or start all over again with the next student naming just one book. As an option, you can do one round of just the New Testament books and the next round the Old Testament books.



Physical Activities:

- Bible Book Scramble: Have children sit in chairs in a circle. Assign a book of the Bible to each child. If you don't have enough children to cover all the books of the bible, ensure that a book of each division of the Bible is assigned to a child i.e. the books of poetry, prophecy etc must be represented or perhaps assign children more than one book, so that all 66 books are covered.

Have one child stand in the middle of the circle of chairs. Remove his or her chair from the circle. The child in the centre will call out the name of a division of the Bible. All children who have a book in that division must leave their seats and find new chairs to sit on while the person in the centre tries to reach one of the empty chairs first. The person who is left without a seat becomes the caller in the centre of the circle.

For extra fun, the caller may choose "Scramble". Then every child must leave his or her seat to find another. The caller can also call out things such as "New Testament" or "Books belonging to the same division as Ruth" or "books written by Paul" etc.

Children who do not leave their seat when they should can be removed from the game, as well as their chair! It is suggested that you then start the game again quite often, assigning everyone new books, so that people who are "out of the game" can join in the fun again, and this will also help to improve everyone's knowledge of the books of the Bible.

- What book am I? Tape the name of a Bible book to each child's back. Then have the whole group roam around the room asking others "yes" or "no" questions to help them discover which Bible Book each of them has. Each person may ask only one question of another at a time. Once someone has correctly guessed his or her book, that student may continue roaming to answer other people's questions. The game is over when all players determine their Bible books.
- Divide the class into two or more equal teams, giving a Bible to the first player in each. Call out the first Bible verse from the list below. The first players race to find it in the Bible, and when they do, they raise their hands. The first to raise his hand is called upon to read the verse aloud. If correct, he earns a point for his team. The Bible is then passed on the second player in the group. The game continues until all the members have had a turn. The team with the most points is the winner.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 1 John 5:3 | 11. 1 Chronicles 16:34 |
| 2. Genesis 1:27 | 12. Jeremiah 51:15 |
| 3. 1 Kings 2:11 | 13. Colossians 3:20 |
| 4. Mark 12:30 | 14. Jude 2 |
| 5. Isaiah 12:2 | 15. Job 1:1 |
| 6. Revelations 4:8 | 16. Habakkuk 3:19 |
| 7. Joel 2:15 | 17. Titus 2:11 |
| 8. 2 Corinthians 13:14 | 18. Song of Solomon 2:1 |
| 9. Acts 12:1 | 19. Galatians 3:27 |
| 10. Ruth 1:16 | 20. Numbers 15:40 |



Song:



Prayer:

Thank God that for the Bible which helps us get to know God better and learn more about God and the world around us.

References:

- The Ultimate Bible Guide for Children's Ministry, Karl Bastion, K Christie Bowler et al, Group, Loveland, Colorado
- My Favourite Bible Activity Book, J. Erikson, 1989, USA: Twenty-third Publications
- 100 Activities for Grades 1 to 8, E. Rossini, 1996, San Francisco: Ignatius Press
- The Confirmation Experience, S. Sayers, Mayhew

Answers to scriptures cake recipe:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ¾ cup Genesis 18:8 (butter) | ¼ teaspoon each 2 Chronicles 9:9 (nutmeg, ginger, all spice) |
| 1 ½ cup Jeremiah 6:20 (sugar) | ½ cup Judges 4:19 (milk) |
| 5 Isaiah 10:14 (separated) (eggs) | 1 T Proverbs 24:13 (honey) |
| 3 cups sifted Leviticus 24:5 (flour) | ¾ chopped Genesis 43:11 (almonds) |
| ½ teaspoon 2 Kings 2:20 (salt) | ¾ cup finely chopped Jeremiah 24:5 (figs) |
| 3 teaspoons Amos 4:5 (yeast / baking powder) | ¾ cup 2 Samuel 16:1 (raisins) |
| 1 teaspoon Exodus 30:23 (cinnamon) | |

For your interest

Biblical scholars feel that the best way to explain the various inconsistencies and duplications in the books of the Pentateuch is to assume that the books are an edited version of oral traditions and original sources. This is known as the documentary hypothesis (JEDP) which identifies four sources or traditions namely:

the Yahwist (J)

the Elohist (E)

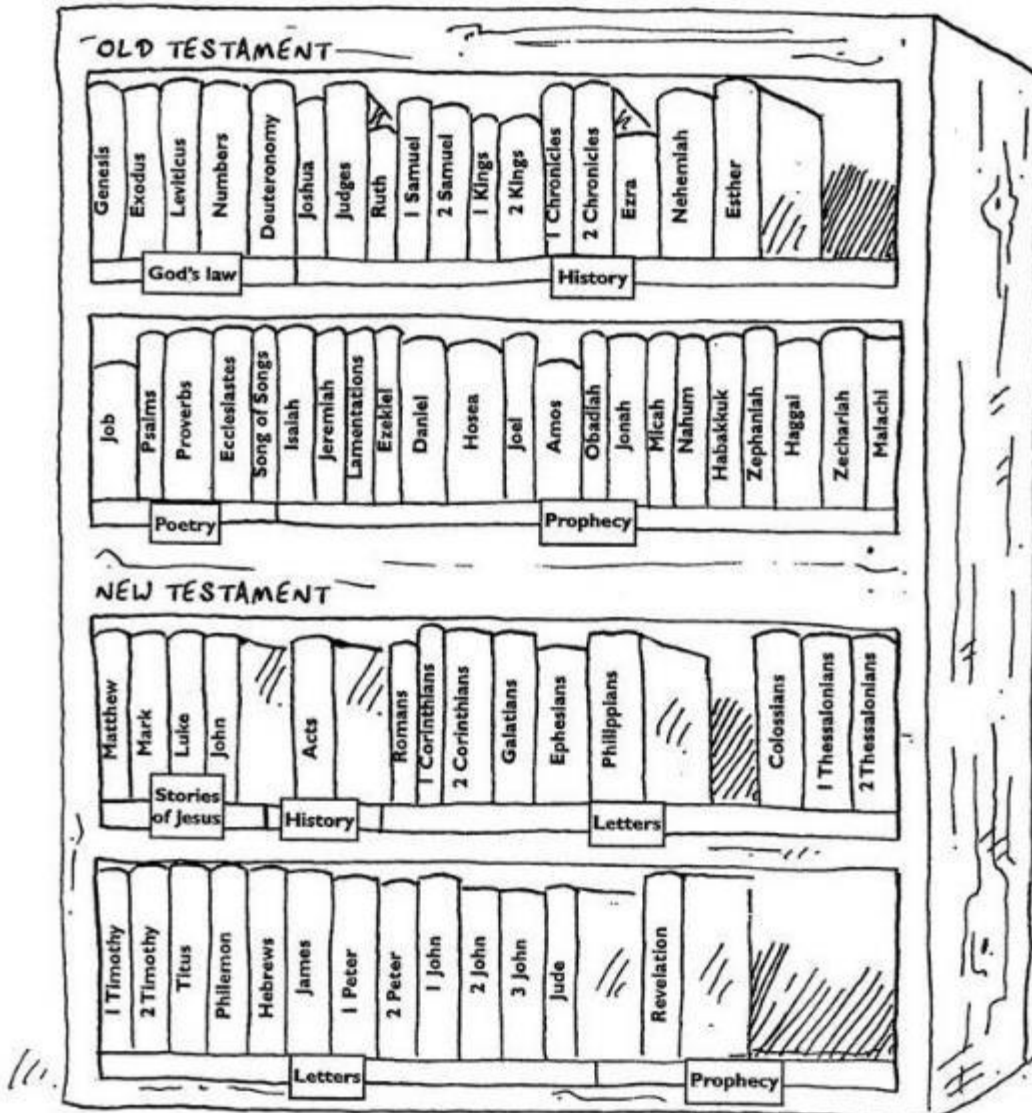
the Deuteronomist (D)

the Priestly (P)

These four sources have been identified by their literary styles, theological concerns and historical situation.

BIBLE BOOKCASE

The Bible is a collection of 66 different books which tell us about God. The books of the Old Testament tell the story of God's people before Jesus came. The books of the New Testament tell us about Jesus and how we can become God's friends. Can you find out which page each book starts on in the Bible you are using? In the bookcase below, colour each type of book a particular colour (eg colour all the poetry books yellow).



Leaving but more fully present (Ascension)

Seventh Sunday of Easter
24 May 2020

Readings: Acts 1: 1-11; Luke 24:44-53; Matthew 28:16-20

Theme: The ascension

Memory verse: Behold I am with you always even to the end of time Mt 28



Information for the teacher:

This past Thursday we celebrated the Ascension of our Lord - when Jesus returned to Heaven. This is a mystery beyond words. It is described as going up to heaven – but this has to be understood in the modern context of space travel and the knowledge that the world is round. Jesus going up in the clouds is a symbol to show that Jesus is free from all restrictions of time and space. Jesus has not abandoned us but shares in our lives more fully as he is not restricted by an earthly body.

The account of the Ascension is found in two places in the New Testament, both written by Luke. The first account is written at the end of the Luke's Gospel and the second at the beginning of the book of Acts.

In the book of Acts, we read that the Ascension happened 40 days after the Resurrection. The Ascension is the bridge between the earthly life of Jesus and the life of the church as the visible sign of the presence of Christ in the world. Ten days later we celebrate Pentecost, the outpouring of God's Spirit – God is still with us!

The Ascension is part of the Resurrection, as is the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost – all three are part of the same event. Jesus emerges from the tomb, returns to the Father, followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Without the Resurrection there can be no Ascension, and without the Ascension there is no Pentecost.

The Ascension is a call for us to be like Jesus. We continue to be witnesses of God's love and the presence of Jesus in the world.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To teach the children about the ascension of Jesus
- For children to know and feel that Jesus is with them.
- To help children live as disciples of Jesus showing compassion and care and to help others live like this as well.
- Jesus calls us to bring the Kingdom of God here on earth



Attention Grabber:

Begin this lesson outside – ask the children to look at the sky. Discuss anything that they see. If there are clouds, discuss what the shapes remind them of. They may even like to lie on the ground for a while and look up into the sky.

Ask the children why they think we are starting the lesson for today in this way. *(Today we are remembering the day the disciples looked up into the sky as Jesus returned to Heaven) In those times clouds / sky represented being in the presence of God. But heaven is not necessarily up there – it can be all around us where there is love and goodness*



Bible Story: The Ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:1-11; Matt 28:16-20; Luke 24:44-53)

Ask the children if they know what special day we remembered this past Thursday. *(The Ascension of Jesus- the day Jesus left His disciples and returned to heaven)*

Let's read about that special day. Listen carefully so you can answer the questions that follow.

The Ascension of Jesus

For 40 days after Jesus rose from the dead, reassuring them that he was alive and would always be with them. And now it was time for Jesus to return to heaven and be with God.

Before He left them, Jesus said, "Go out into the world to all nations and make disciples who would do as Jesus commanded, which was to love one another. And remember, Jesus will always be with you." (Matthew 28:16-20)

Jesus led the disciples to a mountain not far from Jerusalem. It was here that He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. As they were looking up into the sky, two men dressed in white stood beside them.

They said "Why do you stand here looking into the sky?" This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into Heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go."

Jesus disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy, praising God. This was not the end.

Jesus had shown them what kingdom living is all about and we can continue living like that. We are not abandoned even though we can't see Jesus. Maybe it is a little the same as we can't see dead loved ones but they are with God like Jesus is with God. But Jesus is also with us.



Questions:

1. For how many days did Jesus appear to His disciples after He rose from the dead? *(40 days)*
2. Jesus appeared to many people after he rose from the dead. Do you remember which disciple did not believe that Jesus had risen from dead – he was not in the room when Jesus first appeared to his disciples? *(Doubting Thomas)*
3. Before Jesus went back to Heaven, Jesus left the disciples with an important job. Do you know what this important job was? *(To make disciples, go out into the world to share the good news about Jesus.)*
4. Were the disciples sad when they returned to Jerusalem after Jesus had left them? *(No, they went back with great joy, praising God)*
5. As they were watching Jesus leave, what did they see? *(Two men dressed in white)*
6. What did these 2 men say? *(Jesus will come back one day in the same way he left)*
7. Do we know when this will happen? *(No!)*

Discussion

What do you understand by heaven?

Where do you think heaven is?

Do you feel that Jesus is with you especially in times of need?

Can you talk to Jesus about things?



Craft ideas:

1. The older children will enjoy making their own snack made up of blue jelly and whipped cream/marshmallows/meringue. Ask the children how they think this snack relates to the story for today.





Prayer: *(The actions in brackets can be used for the very young children)*

Jesus, you were born as a baby (*rock baby in arms*).
You died on a cross (*arms out then jump and clap hands*).
You are loving, kind and good. (*put up fingers, counting to three*).
In heaven and on earth, your glory shines (*point up and down*).
Help us to go out into the world to spread the good news about You.
Amen

(Susan Sayers, 2001)



Physical activities ideas:

- **Demonstration:** The children will enjoy the oil and water demonstration found at the end of the lesson. This is an effective way of reminding us that we are to go out into the world to
- Helium balloon: Jesus said we must spread the good news to all. Write a message from your class. The message could include a prayer, scripture or words telling of the good news of Jesus. Add an address to it – it could be the address of your church or perhaps the teacher's email. Ask the person who receives this message to send a reply. Attach this message to the helium balloon. Release the balloon and watch it go up, up into the sky until it can be seen no more. Hopefully someone will receive this message and send a response!! Ask the children how they think this activity relates to the lesson for today.
- Bubbles: the children can blow bubbles up into the air to remind them of Jesus going to Heaven
- The children run relay races. Divide the group into two teams, each having a baton. Explain how the baton needs to be transferred from one runner to the next in the race. Before Jesus went to Heaven, he gave us the baton. We need to continue running the race for Jesus – revealing the kingdom to all.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To teach the children about the ascension of Jesus
- To encourage the children to live as Jesus would have them live.
- To know and feel that Jesus is with them always.



Attention Grabber:

Begin this lesson outside – ask the children to look at the sky. Discuss anything that they see. If there are clouds, discuss what the shapes remind them of. They may even like to lie on the ground for a while and look up into the sky.

You could use the oil and water activity below as an attention grabber.

Ask the children if they can guess what the lesson is about today.



Bible Story and Discussion: The Ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:1-11; Matt 28:16-20; Luke 24:44-53)

This past Thursday we celebrated Ascension Day - the day Jesus returned to God.

Like Younger ones discuss the concept of heaven and that we won't get to heaven in a rocket ship and space rockets won't hit heaven

Story

Tell the story of the Ascension. See the younger group lesson.



Review Questions:

1. How many days are there between Easter and the Ascension of Jesus? *(40 days)*
2. During this time, Jesus appeared to a number of people and gave convincing proofs that He was alive – can you name some of these events? *(Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:19); Jesus appears to the disciples behind locked doors, and then to Doubting Thomas (John 20: 19 -30); Jesus appears to two believers on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-15); Jesus appears to the disciples while fishing (John 21:1-14))*
3. On one occasion, while He was eating with them, Jesus told the disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the gift the Father had promised. What gift do you think this was? *(The gift of the Holy Spirit)*
4. After instructing the disciples to be witnesses to the ends of the earth, Jesus was taken up into Heaven and a cloud hid Him from their sight. This is the way they tried to explain something great that had happened.
5. Where do you think heaven is?
6. Do we feel Jesus is still with us?
7. The disciples then returned to Jerusalem with great joy (Luke 24:53), where they stayed until they received the gift God had promised them. How long did they have to wait? *(10 days – we celebrate this at Pentecost, which is next Sunday. After this the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed His word by the signs that accompanied it. (Mark 16:20). We will learn more about this next week)*



Physical activities ideas:

- **Demonstration:** The children will enjoy the oil and water demonstration found at the end of the lesson. This is an effective way of reminding us of Jesus' call for us to spread the kingdom to all corners of the world. (Do try this at home first!) Could be the attention grabber rather than the sky
- **Helium balloon:** Jesus said we must spread the good news to all. Each child can write a message. The message can include a prayer, scripture, or words telling of the good news of Jesus. Each child should add an address to the message – it could be a home address or email. Ask the person who receives this message to send a reply. Attach the messages to the helium balloon. Release the balloon and watch it go up, up into the sky until it can be

seen no more. Hopefully someone will receive these messages and send a response!! Ask the children how they think this activity relates to the lesson for today.

- Relay races. Divide the group into two teams, each having a baton. Explain how the baton needs to be transferred from one runner to the next in the race. At the end of the race discuss that before Jesus went to Heaven, he gave us the baton. We need to continue running the race for Jesus – spreading the good news to all.



Prayer

Lord we lift your name on high;
 Lord we love to sing your praises
 We're so glad you're in our hearts
 We're so glad to you came to save us
 In heaven and on earth, your glory shines
 Help us to go out into the world to spread the good news about You.
 Amen



Worksheet:

The Ascension of Jesus	
Unscramble the following words which can all be found in Acts 1:1-11.	
veaHen _____	siWtnsese _____
usalmereJ _____	ssJue _____
doulC _____	ortFy _____
kyS _____	pearAdep _____
ritpSi _____	wePro _____

Answers: The answers are: Heaven; Jerusalem; cloud; Sky; Spirit; Witnesses; Jesus; Forty; Appeared; Power

References:

<http://www.first-school.ws/features/biblest/ascension.htm>

<http://gardenofpraise.com>

<http://www.catholicicing.com/ascension-of-jesus-crafts-for-kids/>

<http://ministry-to-children.com/jesus-ascension-lesson/>

<http://songsofpraise.org/scramble.php?puzzleid=32>

Living Stones, S. Sayers, 2001

Oil and water demonstration

Supplies:

A white plate
A spoon
A small bowl or saucer
Eye dropper (optional)
Toothpicks
Milk
Cooking Oil
Dish-washing liquid

Instructions:

- Pour a few drops of the dish-washing liquid into a small bowl and soak the ends of toothpicks in it. Set aside.



- Pour enough milk into the plate so the bottom of the plate is covered and there is a thin layer of milk.
- Pour oil over the milk. You don't need as much oil as milk but you'll need enough for it to eventually form a very thin layer over the milk (Don't stress over the amounts). Stir with the spoon then set the spoon to the side.
- Watch for a few minutes as the milk and oil separate and form oil clusters. While this is happening discuss how this looks like the world and its people. People live together in families and towns and countries. The plate looks like a map of the world.
- Now, add drops of food colouring to represent Christians making disciples. The children can take turns lightly touching the soap end of a toothpick to one of the drops of food colouring. Amazingly, the food colouring shoots out across the milk and oil and makes amazing colours.
- Continue doing this until the white plate is full of colours. Discuss while you and the children are doing this how living as witnesses for Jesus and doing good and loving others changes the world.





The birthday of the Church (Pentecost)

Pentecost
31st May 2020

Readings: Acts 1-2

Themes: *The Church is born; the outpouring of the Holy Spirit*

Memory verses:

- *"I see the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken for God is right beside me." Acts 2:25b*
- *"God says I pour out my Spirit upon all people." Acts 2:17*

Pentecost Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to have a change from the usual Sunday school programme and to do something different. Instead of breaking into separate groups, the children can have a big birthday party with red, orange and yellow balloons and red, orange and yellow food e.g. Nik-naks, crisps, Oros – these colours representing the flames of the Holy Spirit. Everyone should come dressed in red.



Information for the teacher

Pentecost is the festival celebrating the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus, ten days after His Ascension. Pentecost Sunday is 7 weeks after Easter and marks the end of Easter. Pentecost Sunday is regarded as the Church's birthday, because with the coming of the Holy Spirit the Church is empowered to witness, in a new way, the presence of Christ in the world.

During Biblical times, this time of the year was also a festival of thanksgiving for harvested crops. Jews of many nations had gathered in Jerusalem for this festival, and so when Peter addressed the crowds, his speech was to an international audience. This resulted in the first converts to Christianity. The Church was now the body of Christ that included people of all cultures and all nations.

Throughout scripture fire is used to symbolise the presence of God.



Lesson Suggestions: (Today's lesson is combined for all ages)

Lesson Objectives:

- To celebrate the birth of the church – the launch party
- To celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit
- To explore what it means that the Holy Spirit journeys with us – is God walking with us
- To tell the children how their own church started and its age



Attention Grabber. Today we are having a party. It possible, before the children arrive, decorate the party area with red (and possibly also orange and yellow balloons). Perhaps have some festive music playing as the children arrive – preferably popular Christian songs. Hopefully they will have remembered to wear red –the colour of Pentecost.

Light a candle and explain that throughout scripture fire is used to symbolise the presence of God.

Explain that today we are having a party. Who knows why? (*Today is Pentecost Sunday - the birthday of the Church.*)

Today we will learn about the day the church was born.



Bible Readings: The Day of Pentecost (Acts 1-2)

Before we continue with our party today we need to learn about that special day when the church was born. (*You may want to find pictures to help you tell this story.*)

It was 10 days after Jesus had returned to Heaven. Before He left the disciples Jesus told them to continue the work that He had done and to make disciples of all nations. Jesus told them that they were to wait in Jerusalem for the gift that God had promised them – the gift of the Holy Spirit.

During this time in Jerusalem there was a harvest festival. It was the end of the grain harvest - the people had collected their crops and all their hard work was done. Now was the time to celebrate and thank God for the crop. And so people from many different nations were in Jerusalem.

The followers of Jesus were gathered in one place. Suddenly..... a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from Heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

And that wasn't all – they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. And that still wasn't all – they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages which they had never learned!

A crowd of people outside on the street heard all this noise coming from the house. They were amazed because they could hear these people speaking in their language, but they knew that the people in the room were all from Galilee and I didn't know any other language except their own.



Bible Story:

- A large fan with strips of yellow and orange crepe paper attached.
- A one burner stove, pot, popcorn for popping and some oil
- Orange and red party hats in the shape of flames



Discussion:

- What did you like best about the story for today? (For example, the flames of fire and did not burn etc.)
- How do you think you would have felt if you were in that room that day, or if you were part of the crowd who heard the noise coming from the house where Jesus' followers were?
- In this story the Holy spirit is represented by fire. How else could the Holy Spirit be represented / imaged?
- Flames are often used in the Bible to represent God. Can you think of other examples? (Burning bush, pillar of fire).
- How do you imagine the Holy Spirit?
- How do you feel about / understand the Holy Spirit?
- Can you see the Holy Spirit in other people / Jesus in other people?



Songs: Let's sing a few songs to remind us of our awesome God and to praise God for all God has done for us. Choose songs for a "praise and worship" session. Particularly choose songs that include the Holy Spirit and praising God. Examples of a few songs you may like to use appear below:



Further Discussion

Ask the children why we are wearing red and why there is so much red, orange and yellow in the room. *(Explain that everything in Church today is red – the priests are wearing red; if there are flowers in the church they should be red; the cloth on the altar is red - all of this is to remind us of the flames of fire that came down on the day of Pentecost.)*

The colour red gives us a picture of the Holy Spirit, God's special gift that was given to the Church at Pentecost. The flames of fire, wind and speaking in tongues were all signs of the Holy Spirit which God sent to the people, so that they could continue the work of Jesus.

And that is how the first Church was born!

For the older children:

At Pentecost the church was started.

A new organisation often is branded in a certain way, it has a logo, certain organisational colours etc.

How would you brand the church? What logo would you have? What colours? How would you make it attractive and relevant for today?

Then if you have a cake ask the children: What else do you usually have at a party?

- Cake!! Cake with candles on it – we are celebrating the birth of the Church. Ask the children what the candles on the cake can remind of us today? (The flames of fire that came down at Pentecost)



(You may want to put on the cake as many candles as the age of your particular church. Perhaps research and discuss with the children how and when your church began. Remember the church began as a small group of people which then spread to all corners of the world.)

We will eat this cake a little later in today's lesson

- Finally, there are gifts at a party. Who knows what the gift is at this party? *(The gift is the Holy Spirit. We are all given the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our helper and comforter, teacher. The Holy Spirit helps us grow in our relationship with God.)*



Explain that often candles are lit in the church as a form of prayer. Let the children light a candle for someone who is sick or who has died or is in need in some way. They could light a candle for a cause such as for the environment.



Craft ideas:

- All the children can decorate a small flame. These flames can all be pasted onto a large piece of cardboard to make a large flame.
- Another idea that the children may enjoy is paint blowing – making a “flame” using straws to blow and spread red, yellow and orange paint over a piece of paper. (Plastic straws are bad for the environment. Try to use paper ones, or maybe pasta and food colouring)



- The younger children will enjoy making a Pentecost crown, as shown in the pictures below. (Refer to the website “Crafting the word of God – Pentecost” should you need further help with this craft)



Snack: Now it's time to eat the cake. Give each child a piece of cake. You may want to also have other party snacks such as and oros/orange drink – all the snacks should be red, yellow or orange!



Physical activity: If time, play party games or dance to music

Three in one (The Trinity: God is Community)

Trinity Sunday
7 June 2020

Readings: Genesis 1:1-4a; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20

Theme: Three Persons, One God

Memory verse: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.” 2 Corinthians 13: 13



Information for the teacher:

Today we celebrate the greatest mystery of our faith, the mystery of the Trinity. The belief about God, the three-in-one, is at the very heart of the Christian faith and is central to the worship of our church. Many hymns refer to the Trinity such as: “Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost” or “God in three persons blessed Trinity”. In church, when we recite the Nicene Creed we again speak of God, the three-in-one, and we confess God to be the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are baptised into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and we are married in the same threefold name. (Note that there is a move in some Anglican churches to rather speak of God the Creator, rather than the father) The word ‘trinity’ means “tri-unity” or ‘three-in-oneness’ and was something that exercised the minds of theologians, the debates of Councils and the battles between churches for many centuries.

For our time, we may ask, what does the Trinity mean for us today? We live in world of great individualism (where everyone is taught to think only about what is best for themselves), inequality (the rich get richer while the poor get poorer), and loneliness (studies have found that despite the increase in social media, people have felt more alone than before). The mystery of the Trinity may be helpful in such a world. In the Trinity, we see God as three persons in total unity. That means, in God, we see the best example of living and being community. Although the Father/Mother is different from the Son and different from the Holy Spirit, they are all equal as one God.

If God is community, then we ought to be community as well. Sharing, caring and loving everyone equally is what we do as a Beloved community. No one is left out. We are all equal, male, female, black, white, young and old..., because God is equal community. We can teach the children about sharing, caring and loving in a new way. We don’t share because we are forced to, we share and love everyone because we are made in the image of God. And God is the best example of a sharing equal community.



Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To understand the Trinity as community
- To know God as Creator, Jesus the Son of God and the Holy Spirit
- To learn how to be a more sharing, equal community



Attention Grabber: Obtain three different kinds of hats – like a cyclist helmet, a cricket hat, and a soldier's beret. Talk about how your friend is the owner of all of these hats. Take out the cyclist helmet and say that you have seen him wear this when he cycles. Ask why he wears it? Then go on to the cricket hat- he plays cricket; used to protect from the heat etc. Why is a soldier's beret worn? He is a soldier - it is part of the uniform. So, he is a cyclist, a cricketer, and a soldier, that makes him three persons in one. Now that's a thought - three persons in one! Have you ever heard of such a thing?

OR

Bring objects or have pictures of objects that begin with tri e.g. Triangle, tricycle. What does tri-mean? It means 3 – today we are talking about the number 3.



Discussion:

Today we are talking about the number 3 because today is Trinity Sunday. "Tri" means 3 and so Trinity means 3.

Who is God the creator? (all answers are correct but the most acceptable answers for this task are the Creator, our Father/Mother/Friend, even the God is everything or the great force etc.)

Then ask, and who is Jesus? (answers might be the Son of God, our saviour, Jesus is God)

Is Jesus also God? (yes)

Finally ask, who is the Holy Spirit (answers might be the wind, the dove, the breath of God)

Is the Holy Spirit also God? (yes)

So, if this is true, can we say that God is 3 in 1? (most definitely)

If God is love, and the Trinity is God 3 in 1, then we can say God is a community of Love.

Explain to them that God the Creator, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit are all equal. No one is above the other. They are all different and yet they are all equally God. They share and flow into each other. God is a community of Love and equality.

Ask them, what does this mean for us today?

- Should we live in community with others? (community, family, friends are all important and its important that we love and care for each other)
- Should we share? (if our classmate does not have lunch, we should share with them, we can also give food and clothes to the poor and share with those who have less than us. There is no room for selfishness)
- Should we treat others equally? (no bullying, no fighting and hurting other people and creatures...)

We are all different. Some are boys, some are girls, some black, some are brown, or white, some are tall, others short, some like soccer, others like netball, some like pizza, others like burgers. But we are all made in the image of God. We are all supposed to live in community of love with each other. The Trinity reminds us that we are always better together than alone.

To further explain the Trinity, draw three circles on separate sheets of paper. Cut them out and place them on a flat surface so that all the circle shapes overlap at the centre. (See drawing below). Each circle represents one of the three persons of the Trinity. Various items describing the 3 parts of the Trinity should be available for the children as they build the lesson with you. In each circle place a number of objects and symbols that represents that person of the Trinity.

The **first circle** represents **God the Father, Creator** of all things. God's handiwork can be seen in everything God has created.

Ask the children to choose from the items in your collection things that represent God the Father and Creator and place them in the first circle e.g. flower, shells, pictures of animals

The **second circle** represents **God the Son**, revealed in the person of **Jesus**, true God and true man. Jesus came to bring God's love, save all people from their sins. He died on the cross and rose again. Jesus is our friend, a friend of all children.

Your collection of items for the second circle could include: Jesus born as a baby – the manger scene; picture of Jesus; a cross; a picture of Mary, His mother.

The **third circle** represents the **Holy Spirit**, the one who **helps** us. We can't see the Holy Spirit but we can see its effects.

Your collection for this circle should include a dove; a candle to represent the tongues of flames seen above the disciples at Pentecost and a pinwheel or fan to represent the wind which also represented the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; pictures of how the Holy Spirit helps us make good choices, or when we are sick or need help.



Craft ideas:

- For each child, you will need a paper plate (or a circular piece of paper which is the size of a paper plate). Using a pen, draw lines to divide the plate into 3 equal sections. Label the sections: God, the father/Creator; God the Son; God the Holy Spirit. Write the word, "Trinity" in the centre of the plate. The children can make shapes from play dough to represent the different forms of God and place them in the correct section. Another option is to bring pictures representing the different forms of God for the children to colour and add to the correct circle.

Or

Create your own Trinity symbol. Using paper, ice-cream sticks etc. Here are two examples



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Songs: Songs to do with the Trinity are usually too difficult for the very young children. Perhaps sing some of their favourite songs and play the **tri**-angle at the same time to remind them of the Trinity.



Prayer

Dear God. Thank you that you are so great and wonderful. You are our Father who created our beautiful world, you are the Son who understands us, and you are the Holy Spirit who helps us with everything. AMEN



Physical activity:

Go outside and play 3-legged races.

The “3 legged” race: Children pair up and the two legs in the middle are tied together. Ask why we are playing 3-legged races today. (Trinity means 3!) Each pair needs to blow up and carry a balloon between them as they race against other pairs. (They may not use their hands to carry the balloon to the other side) Once on the other side, the one member of the pair must sit down while the other member pops the balloon.

Questions relating to physical activity:

- What were the different ways each of you worked in your pairs? What was the same?
- How does this relate to the unity (oneness) and harmony (togetherness) of God? (The members of the group work towards one goal; they have different roles so as to complement each other)



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To grasp an understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity.
- To understand the Trinity as community
- To discover that each one of us is called to share on God's own life.



Attention Grabber ideas:

- **Huddle up:** This game works particularly well in large groups, so this would be a good game to play if your Sunday School meets as a large group at some stage, so perhaps think of a way to modify the game if your group is not so big. Call out a number, such as four. The children must huddle up in groups of four. People who are not in a group are out. Continue calling different numbers, especially the number 3, until there are only three people left. Emphasise that today we are focussing on the number three – any ideas why?



Discussion:

Today is Trinity Sunday – what do we mean by the Trinity?

Have you ever noticed that when people are finished a prayer, they first touch their head and then two spots on their upper body. (Show how it's done). Who knows why people do this? It is to remind us of God, the Father, God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit – 3 parts making up God – this is known as the Trinity.

If God is love, and the Trinity is God 3 in 1, then we can say God is a community of Love.

Explain to them that God the Creator, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit are all equal. No one is above the other. They are all different and yet they are all equally God. They share and flow into each other. God is a community of Love and equality.

Ask them, what does this mean for us today?

- How can we live in community with others? (community, family, friends are all important and it's important that we love and care for each other)
- Should we share? (if our classmate does not have lunch, we should share with them, we can also give food and clothes to the poor and share with those who have less than us. There is no room for selfishness)
- What does it mean to treat others equally? (no bullying, racism, sexism and no fighting and hurting other people and creatures...)

We are all different. Some are boys, some are girls, some black, some are brown, or white, some are tall, others short, some like soccer, others like netball, some like pizza, others like burgers. But we are all made in the image of God. We are all suppose to live in community of love with each other. The

Trinity reminds us that we are always better together than alone.

There are many ways to try to describe the trinity. The Trinity is often compared to an egg or an apple. Why? *(An egg is made up of 3 parts – the shell, white and yolk. An apple is also made up of 3 parts – the skin, flesh and core. Each part of the egg and apple performs a different function but each part is necessary)*

Another illustration is that of the 3 phases of water. Ask the children why they think this is so.

The **solid form of water (ice)** reminds us of **God the Father and Creator**. Ice is hard. It is solid. In the same way, God the Father and Creator is our solid foundation.

The **liquid form of water** reminds us of **God the Son**. We use water to take baths, to get clean. In the same way, God the son, died on the cross to cleanse us of our sins.

The **gas form of water** reminds us of **God the Holy Spirit**. Gas cannot be seen, but you can see the effects of it, as we do when we feel the steam from hot water. In the same way the Holy Spirit cannot be seen, but the effects of His presence can be seen and felt in our lives as the Holy Spirit works to make His will known to us and to change us to become more like Him.



Physical Activity:

The “3 legged” race: Children pair up and the two legs in the middle are tied together. Ask why we are playing 3-legged races today. (Trinity means 3!) Each pair needs to blow up and carry a balloon between them as they race against other pairs. (They may not use their hands to carry the balloon to the other side) Once on the other side, the one member of the pair must sit down while the other member pops the balloon.

Questions relating to physical activity:

- What were the different ways each of you worked in your pairs? What was the same?
- How does this relate to the unity (oneness) and harmony (togetherness) of God? *(The members of the group work towards one goal; they have different roles so as to compliment each other)*



Application Questions

(For 10 – 12-year olds)

- How can we express this unity and harmony in our group / church as we try to give others a picture of our real God? *(We need to be inclusive; loving and work together; supportive in our relationships both in and out of church)*
- Why is God pleased when people exhibit faithfulness, love and harmony within a family? *(The family is then reflecting the unity of the Trinity)*
- Remember God became part of humanity’s world so that we can become part of God’s world and so each one of us is called to share in God’s own life - we become part of the Trinity. What does this mean for you?



Prayer:

Dear God. Thank you that you are so great and wonderful. You are our Father who created our beautiful world, you are the Son who understands us, and you are the Holy Spirit who helps us with everything. AMEN

- God for us, we call you Father.
God alongside us, we call you Jesus.
God within us, we call you Holy Spirit.
You are the eternal mystery that enables, enfolds, and enlivens all things,
Even us and even me.

- Every name falls short of your goodness and greatness.
We can only see you in what is.
We ask for such perfect seeing—
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.
Amen. (So be it.) Rohr



Craft:

- Make a bookmark, weaving 3 cords together to represent the Trinity.
- You make the crafts mentioned in the younger children section.

Work sheets:

There are several references in the Bible which refer to the Trinity. The Gospel of John has many Trinitarian references. Look each reference up and identify which parts of the Trinity are represented in each verse (make a tick next to the correct one). Fill out the grid below:

	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
John 1 : 33- 34			
John 3 : 16			
John 14 : 16+17			
John 14 : 26			
John 16 : 15			
John 20 : 1- 2			
Matt 3 : 16 – 17			
Matt 28 : 18 -20			
Hebrews 1			

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Children's service

Second Sunday after Pentecost 14 June 2020



Information for the teacher:

Youth Day is celebrated in South Africa on June 16th. We thought some churches might like to celebrate youth day by holding a youth service. Due to the Covid-19 we may not be able to do this and we have not been able to get permission from the Bishop of Johannesburg due to the pressing issues of the coronavirus. Therefore, we have included another lesson about our talents which can be used instead. However, you might like to have a children's service and to make changes to the traditional liturgy which will help the children to understand better and allow them to be part of the service.

We recognise that even Anglican churches differ from one another. Some churches are used to having youth services, others are not. What follows are suggestions that you can use and some ideas on how to have a youth service. Use what is helpful for you. If parts are not helpful, you do not have to use them.

Today's lesson is a celebration of our young people. They should be part of the planning. Try to have young people read the lessons, pray the prayers, choose the songs etc.

A Children's Liturgy

Priest: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you

Gloria

Confession

All: Father we are sorry for the times we have done wrong things.

When we have been selfish and greedy

when we have been unkind and hurtful to others when we have been unfriendly

when we have ignored you and others;

we ask you to forgive us and to help us be more faithful and loving.

Priest: Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy on you; pardon your sins and set you free from them; and strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Collect of the day

Gospel Reading

Youth creed

We believe and trust in God the parent, who created the world.

We believe and trust in Jesus who redeemed us.

We believe and trust in God's Holy Spirit who gives life and inspires us.

We believe and trust in one God, Parent, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

Sermon

A story that illustrates the importance of working together and remaining in God can be found at the end and could be used. You could ask some of the children to break the single sticks and then to try and break the bundle of sticks.

Prayers

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be with you always

All: Peace be with you

The offertory

Priest: Yours Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour and the majesty, for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.

Amen

The taking of the bread and wine

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. For us it becomes the bread of life

All: Blessed be God forever

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. For us it becomes the cup of salvation.

All: Blessed be God forever

The great thanksgiving

Priest: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you

Priest: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them to God

Priest: Let us give thanks to God

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise

All: Why do we give thanks and praise at this table?

Priest: We give thanks for all that God had done for us.

Priest: God created everything. **And it was all good**

All: Let us give thanks and praise

Priest: Christ our Lord became human like us, and died to save us

All: Let us give thanks and praise

Priest: God sent the Holy Spirit to gather us together as the people of God

All: Let us give thanks and praise

Priest: So come let us join together to worship this God who loves us.

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest

Priest: We praise you that before Jesus suffered and died, our Saviour gave us this holy meal to share and told us to continue it until he comes again

All: Why do we eat bread together at this table?

Priest: On the night before he died, Jesus took bread. After giving thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying "take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

All: Why do we drink from the cup together at this table?

Priest: In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup saying, "this cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins, Do this in remembrance of me.

All: What do we remember at this table?

Priest: We remember the Gods gracious love for us, Christ's death and resurrection for us, and the Spirit's tender care for us.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith

All: Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again

Priest: Merciful God, pour out your holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. In eating and drinking together may we be made one with Christ and with one another.

All: Amen

The Lord's prayer

The breaking of the bread

Priest: The bread which we break is it not a sharing of the body of Christ?

All: We who are many are one body for we all partake of the one bread.

Priest: Draw near and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Chris which he gave for you. Feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

The conclusion

Priest: Give thanks to the Lord for he is gracious

All: God's mercy endures forever

Father almighty

we offer ourselves to you

as a living sacrifice

in Jesus Christ our Lord

Send us out into the world

in the power of the holy spirit

to live and work

to your praise and glory.

The blessing

Leader: Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord

All: In the name of Christ Amen

A possible sermon

(For this sermon you need a number of sticks and some string. Do practice breaking the sticks and tying them together before you give the sermon. Ask questions of the children. What do they think will happen? Ask them how they can remain in God? And how they can be friends with others and work together and not fight).

Once there was a man who had three sons. Their names were Tashi, Sashi and Mashi. They all helped their father to make the beautiful carpets. Tashi drew up the designs for the carpets, Sashi mixed the beautiful dyes to colour the carpets and Mashi wove the wonderful designs, using the beautiful coloured wools to make the carpets.

One day the emperor declared that he was holding a competition to see who could make the most beautiful carpet in all the country. The father and his sons thought that they would enter the competition and try to make the most beautiful carpet. And so, they started work, But, then they started to quarrel and to argue amongst themselves.

My designs said Tashi are so beautiful. I am the greatest and without me we will not win the prize. It is my design that is most important. But Sashi thought that without his beautiful colours the carpets would not look so luminous and he thought that he was the most important. And then Mashi who did the weaving said that he was the really important one and that without him there would be no carpets at all. And so the 3 brothers fought and quarrelled. They were so busy quarrelling that they did not have time to make the carpet. Their father watched in distress. He knew that his sons had to work together in order to make the most beautiful of all carpets. And so he called them all to him.

He told them to bring him some sticks. They did this. He gave each of them a stick and told them to break it. They did this easily, laughing that he had asked them to do such a simple task. Then the father tied the sticks together and gave the bundle to Tashi and said.

“Can you break that bundle of sticks?” The boy tried to do so. “No, father, I can’t”, he said.

“Then give the bundle to your brothers. Perhaps one of them can do it”.

The brothers all tried, but they could not break the bundle.

And the father said to them, if you work together you will be strong and we will have the most beautiful carpet but if you fight one another and work separately we will never be able to make the most beautiful carpet.

The brothers looked at one another. They looked at their Father and they realised that what he said was true. They started to work together. Tashi showed the others his design. Sashi mixed up the colours to make the design and Mashi set up the loom and started to weave. They created the most beautiful carpet using the design of Tashi, the colours of Sashi and the handwork of Mashi. And they won the prize.

So, what do we learn from this?

In our gospel reading today Jesus said his disciples out to tell others about the good news. But if they had not remained united with God they would not have been able to do that. If they had separated themselves from God, they would no longer be strong. How do we remain with God?

And if the disciples had fought and quarrelled among one another they would not have spread the good news. They had to remain united, in love in order to live as followers of Jesus. And we need to do the same.

Don't bury your talents

(The parable of the talents)

Second Sunday after Pentecost
14 June 2020

Readings: *Mathew 25:14-28*

Theme: *Using the talents God gave you.*

Memory verses: *"Well done, you good and faithful servant. Come and share your Master's happiness!" Matt 25 v 21*



Information for the teacher:

This is not the reading for today but is included as otherwise this story is not covered this year. Also we are very uncertain if a children's service can be held so have decided at the last minute to include another lesson.

The parable of the talents tells the story of a master who divided money (talents) among his three servants, according to their abilities. No one received more or less than they could handle. Two of his servants made good use of their talents and were rewarded. The third servant did not, and his talent was removed from him.

In the [New Testament](#), the term "talent" meant something very different to what it does today. The talents [Jesus Christ](#) spoke of in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant ([Matthew 18:21-35](#)) and the Parable of the Talents ([Matthew 25:14-30](#)) referred to the largest unit of currency at the time.

A Talent represented a rather large sum of money. According to *New Nave's Topical Bible*, one who possessed five talents of gold or silver was a millionaire by today's standards. Some calculate the talent in the parables to be equivalent to 20 years of wages for the common worker. Other scholars estimate more conservatively, valuing the New Testament talent somewhere between R10 000 to R300 000 today.

The present day use of the word "talent" as an ability comes from this parable. A talent represents any kind of resource we are given. God gives us time, gifts and other resources according to our abilities, and we should use them wisely. We are responsible to use well what God has given us. The issue is not how much we have, but **how** we use what we have. God wants us to be all that we were created to be – to be our true selves.

Today's lesson is a celebration of the talents that God has given us. We all need to consider ways in which we can use our talents to further the Kingdom of God. Also we can help others to find their talents and use our talents for others.



Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

To teach children that we have all been special gifts and qualities which we must use.

- To help others to find their gifts



Attention Grabber:

Today's lesson is a lesson of celebration – it is a celebration of the talents that God has given us. Preferably begin today's lesson as a group – older and younger children together. Children can display their talents to the rest of the group – this may involve playing a musical instrument; singing; dancing; gymnastics; doing a trick that no-one else can do etc

At the end of the display, discuss that we all have been blessed with talents – something that we are good at doing. Sometimes we are not yet aware of our talents, but we are all special in some way. This is what we will be exploring when we go to class.

Today's lesson will hopefully help the children to discover or recognise their talents, and how these talents can be used to further the Kingdom of God.



Bible story and Discussion: Parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14 -28)

Ask the children to share with you what they like to do. What do they think they are good at? Perhaps they like to sing, or draw, or dance, or play ball.

Today we will be discussing that God has made us all different but special in some way.

God would like us to use what we have been given to grow God's Kingdom.

To help us understand this, we are going to learn about a story which Jesus told. Do you remember what we call stories that Jesus told? (*Parables*)

The children will really enjoy the story if you give each child some coins (possibly chocolate coins), "bank" notes, or even sweets. Give some children more bank notes than others.

In this story, a wealthy man was going on a long trip. He called his workers together and gave each of them some of his money to look after. To one he gave, 3 coins, to another he gave 5 coins, to another he gave 3 coins etc *(Go around the group, giving each child a different amount of money.)*

He then went on his trip.

What do you think happened to all the money while he was gone? Do you think some of the workers made more money? Who do you think made more money? Do you think anyone lost all their money?

Well, when the man returned, he found that the worker who was given lots of coins went out and made even more money. The one who was given very little just hid the coins and gave them back to the man when he returned.

Who do you think made the man happy? *(The person who developed /grew their gift)*

He was not happy with the person who just hid his coins and didn't do anything with what he was given.

And so it is with us – God wants us to use the special talents we have been given. Don't just hide the special gifts with which God has blessed you.

Let's now put all these coins into the centre of the circle and share them with each other. That's what God would want us to do – to share our special skills with one another. That's how the Kingdom of God can grow.



Craft ideas:

Bee Thumb-body for Jesus

We have all been given something that is special about us. We are all "thumb-body" special in God's eyes! It is important that we make use of our special qualities.

Materials:

Inkpad (or poster paint)
White paper
Yellow paper
Black Markers, Glue sticks
cloth to wipe hands

Before class, write the following heading in bold letters on pieces of white construction paper:

"I can bee thumb-body for Jesus"
(Matt 25:14-28)

At the bottom of the page print the following words: **Please write the special talents and qualities of your child on this piece of paper.**

During class, help each child to make “bees” on their piece of paper using their thumb print. Help the children to use an inkpad (or poster paint) to make a number of thumbprints on their paper. Then help them glue on wings made from ovals cut from yellow construction paper (or else just draw wings). The children can add feelers and body decorations to each bee. The children can take this home and ask people who know them to add words about them to this picture.

1. **Coin rubbings:** Give each child a piece of paper, a coin and a crayon. The children can place the paper over the coin and rub over the coin so that an image of the coin appears on the paper. They can make a number of rubbings. The following can be written at the top of the page:

The parable of the talents
(Matt 25:14-28)

I am good at.....

Ask the children to list what they are good at, or ask their parents to write down their special talents and qualities.

Snack: chocolate coins, if possible.



Song:



Prayer: *Before the prayer, you may want to ask each child what they are good at. Note that this can also refer to a quality such as sharing, caring etc.*

Dear Lord, thank you that we are all different but special. Help us to do what we can to make your Kingdom grow. Amen



Physical Activity: As we are all different, we all enjoy doing different things. Some of us enjoy drawing, others enjoy playing musical instruments, others enjoy doing puzzles, others enjoy playing ball games etc. If possible, have a range of activities for the children to choose what they would most like to do, else just go outside and play ball games.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To teach children that we have all been special gifts and qualities which we must try to use to further the Kingdom of God
- To identify the gifts and special qualities we have been given
- help others find their gifts



Attention Grabber:

Today's lesson is a lesson of celebration – it is a celebration of the talents that God has given us. Preferably begin today's lesson as a group – older and younger children together. Children can display their talents to the rest of the group – this may involve playing a musical instrument; singing; dancing; gymnastics; doing a trick that no-one else can do etc

At the end of the display, discuss that we all have been blessed with talents – something that we are good at doing. Sometimes we are not yet aware of our talents, but we are all special in some way. This is what we will be exploring when we go to class.

Today's lesson will hopefully help the children to discover or recognise their talents, and how these talents can be used to further the Kingdom of God.



Bible Story: Parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14 -28)

Our story for today is about our talents and how God would like us to use them.



What is a talent? *(It is something that we are good at e.g. soccer; playing the violin. It can also refer to a special quality we have e.g. friendly)*

What do we call stories that Jesus told? *(parables)*

In this parable, Jesus compares talents that we are given with servants each receiving a certain amount of money (In many versions of this Bible story, the “talent” mentioned in the story actually refers to the currency for money in those days).

Let's read what God expects the servants to do with this money.



Discussion

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach us in this parable? (*We should use, not hide our talents*)

1. We have all been blessed with different talents and special qualities. We are all different but equally special! It is important that we make use of our talents in whatever way we can, especially to further the Kingdom of God.

It is of course important for us to realise what our talents and special qualities are – sometimes we are not aware of **all** our talents and special qualities!

Give the children some time to identify their talents and special qualities. Here is a list of some talents and special qualities you may want to mention, some of which the children may not have thought of: Telling stories; imagination; listening; problem solving; making people laugh; cooking; raising money; painting; drawing; reading; making friends; making crafts; sewing; teaching; prayer; creativity; leader; well-liked; dancing; musical; sporty; good memory; observable; mathematical.

Mention that you can often identify a talent as being something you are good at or something you enjoy.

2. Now ask each child to name some special gifts or qualities he/she has been given. If the class knows each other well, they can add to this list.
3. Ask the children to give examples of how talents/special qualities can be used to build the Kingdom of God e.g. a soccer star could perhaps be an excellent role model to his fans – be well behaved both on the court and off; you could use a baking tin to cook cookies to raise money; a cyclist could ask people to sponsor them for a particular charity.
6. Today's lesson is an opportunity to try to involve the older children with duties within the Sunday school and church. Here are some ideas where they can get involved:

The friendly, helpful members can be given the duty of welcoming the little children and shepherding them into the Sunday school.

- The musically inclined can help with the praise and worship.
- Those that read well can be asked to read the scripture reading.
- Those that are responsible can be asked to take the collection, and be responsible for adding up the money and handing the money to the side's person on duty.
- The well-organised can act as side's person when the children go in to church for communion and to make sure that any handicapped children also get to the altar rail.



Physical Activity:

As we are all different, we all enjoy doing different things. Some of us enjoy drawing, others enjoy playing musical instruments, others enjoy doing puzzles, others enjoy playing ball games etc. If possible, have a range of activities for the children to choose what they would most like to do, else just go outside and play ball games.

- Play Frisbee/ ball: The link to the lesson for today is: when you play Frisbee/ball, it is thrown to you. You then throw it onto someone else. So it is with our talents. We have been given a talent – it is important to not just hold on to it, but to pass it on – make use of it.

Have a ball of wool or string. You hold one end and throw it to someone in the group. They catch it and hold it and throw it to someone else. Continue to throw the ball of wool until everyone is holding it and you are all connected to one another through the wool.

Snack: Chocolate gold coins.



Prayer: Dear Lord, Thank you that we are all different, but equally special. May we use our talents and special qualities to make your kingdom grow. Amen

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Offering: Giving your best to God

(Cain and Abel)

Third Sunday after Pentecost
21 June 2020

Reading: Gen 4

Theme: Offerings

Memory verse: "Each should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" 2 Cor 9:7



Information for the teacher:

Our focus for the remaining part of the year now moves to the Old Testament, starting with one of the first stories of the Bible.

The Old Testament starts with the book of Genesis. The word "Genesis" means "origin" or beginning. Genesis describes the beginning of human beings and the universe in which we live and have been given dominion over; the beginning of sin and recounts the painful stories of many lives ruined as a result; the beginning of God's plan of redemption and the beginning of the Hebrew nation through which the Messiah was to come.

The beginning of Genesis describes the perfect world that God created – this will be explored more fully during the Season of Creation in September. The fall of Adam and Eve follows on from the story of God's perfect creation, and the story of Cain and Abel then follows on from Adam and Eve leaving the Garden of Eden.

Cain was the firstborn of Adam and Eve. Like his father Adam, he became a farmer and worked the soil. Abel was the second son of Adam and Eve and was an animal herder. As was done in those days, both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God in thanksgiving for what God had done for them. God was pleased with Abel's offering of his best lamb, but not with Cain's offering from his harvest. As a result, in a fit of anger, Cain killed his brother.

The Bible does not exactly say why God rejected Cain's sacrifice. Perhaps he had come with an improper attitude or perhaps his offering was not up to God's standards. Perhaps Cain had done wrong. Proverbs 21:27 says "The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable – how much more so when brought with evil intent!"

We too, make offerings to God - offerings of our time, money and possessions. We should give as a response to love for God and God's love for us, not to gain God's favour. It is not what we offer that is important, for all things are God's in the first place, but we should always give cheerfully and of our best, and with a pure heart.



Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objective:

- To encourage the children to always give of their best to God, to give cheerfully and with a pure heart



Attention Grabber:

Show the children a healthy, perfect flower and a dying flower; a perfect fruit and a spoiled fruit; a whole biscuit and half a biscuit. In each case, ask the children which they prefer. If they had to give one of each away, which would they give to someone else and which would they keep?

Today we are beginning our journey through the Old Testament stories –stories found at the beginning of the Bible. Have you heard of the story of Cain and Abel? Today we learn more about this story and the gifts each of them made to God.



Bible Story: The story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4)

If possible, use a children's Bible with pictures, or tell the story in your own words. For the very young children, you may prefer to leave out the part of the story where Cain kills Abel and rather just focus on Abel who gave a gift which was pleasing to God while Cain did not.



Review Questions:

1. What are the names of Adam and Eve's first sons that are mentioned in the Bible? (*Cain and Abel*)
2. What were Cain and Abel's jobs? (*Cain – farmer; Abel – shepherd*)
3. What did Abel give to God? (*the firstborn of the flock – one of the lambs born first because they were the best ones*)
4. What did Cain give to God? (*Some of the fruit from his crops*)
5. Whose gift did God prefer? (*Abel's*)
6. Why do you think God preferred Abel's offering? (*Maybe he gave of his best; maybe he gave cheerfully; maybe he had done everything right in God's eyes – he had a generous heart*)

7. In what ways can we give to God? (*money, gifts such as giving to the poor, using our talents to glorify God e.g. singing praises*)

When we give we should give in a way that pleases God. It is not what we give that is important, but whenever we give we should always give joyfully and of our best, and with a pure heart.



Craft:

- **Offering box** – children can each make their own offering box to take home and return once full, or the class can make one big offering box, which they can fill over the next few weeks. The offering box can be large so that items such as cans of food and long lasting items can be included.

Snack: Fruit. Relate this to the lesson – Cain and Abel brought their offerings to God. Cain brought the fruit from his harvest.



Songs: We offer God our gifts because we are thankful for all God has done for us. The songs you sing today could include graces sung before meals, which can be used to remind the children of all God has done for us.



Physical Activity:

Open gates:

A person\ s stand in front of a group of children and then calls out a name someone. The person called must try and get past them without being touched. If the person succeeds, the reach the other side and scream “open gates!” Then, the entire group can run across the field and try not to get touched by the person in the middle. If someone is touched, they join the person in the centre. They are placed in middle and can also help the person try touch someone else The goal was to get everyone into the centre pack and the degree of difficulty increased as more and more people get caught.

Or

Play fruit salad:

This game needs at least 8 players. Form a circle of chairs that is one chair fewer than the total number of players. Choose a player to be “in” – that player stands in the centre of the circle. Divide all the players into three groups of fruit by going around the group and naming them either an apple, orange or pear. The person who is “in” calls the name of a fruit. If he calls out apples, everyone who is that fruit must get up quickly and change places. People who are not apples remain seated. The person who is “in” tries to sit in an empty spot whenever players swop positions. If they manage to sit on a chair, the person not sitting on a chair is then “in”. The person in the middle can also call fruit salad and everyone who is seated has to change spots. The game can finish whenever you like.



Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus. We thank you for everything you have given us such as.....
Please help us to always give of our best to you, and may we always give with a cheerful and pure heart. Amen



Older children (7 -13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To understand the meaning of an offering
- To encourage the children to always give of their best to God, to give cheerfully and with a pure heart



Attention Grabber:

Show the children a healthy, perfect flower and a dying flower; a perfect fruit and a spoiled fruit; a whole biscuit and half a biscuit. In each case, ask the children which they prefer. If they had to give one of each away, which would they give to someone else and which would they keep?

Today we are beginning our journey through the Old Testament stories –stories found at the beginning of the Bible. Have you heard of the story of Cain and Abel? Today we learn more about this story and the gifts each of them made to God.



Bible Story: The story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4)

Preferably, make use of a children's Bible, or tell the story in your own words



Review Questions:

1. Why do you think God preferred Abel's offering? *(Maybe he gave of his best; maybe he gave cheerfully; maybe he had done everything right in God's eyes – he had a pure heart, not a heart filled with sin)*
2. Why do we give offerings to the Lord? *(To thank God for all God has done. We do it as a response to our love for God and God's Love for us, and not to gain God's favour – God loves us anyway!)*
3. When during the Anglican Church service do we bring our offerings to the Lord? What are the words that are used during this time? *(During the offertory, directly after the peace. "Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour and the*

majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.”)

4. In what ways can we give to God? *(money, gifts such as giving to the poor, using our talents to glorify God e.g. singing praises)*



Discussion

What can jealousy do to us – what makes you feel jealousy?

Are some favoured over others and how does that make you feel?

How do we deal with feelings of jealousy?

How do we give – freely generously or grudgingly?



Prayer: *Begin with a time of reflection where the children think of what they can offer to God in thanksgiving and praise for all God has done for us.*

Lord God, we thank you for everything you have given us such as..... *(the children can mention what God has done for us)*

Please help us to always give of our best to you, and may we always give with a cheerful and pure heart. Amen

All that I am

All that I am, all that I do,
All that I'll ever have I offer now to you.
Take and sanctify these gifts for your honour Lord,
Knowing that I love and serve you is enough reward.
All that I am, all that I do,
All that I'll ever have I offer now to you.



Song: Any song of offering can be used.



Craft ideas:

- Make a group banner incorporating everything learnt in today's lesson.
- Offering box – children can each make their own offering box to take home and return once full, or the class can make one big offering box, which they can fill over the next few weeks. The offering box can be large so that items such as cans of food and long lasting items can be included.

- **“Cheerful giver”**
- Make ‘caritas’ gifts to give someone. That is a love gift. It can be anything. Once it is made it is given to someone in the congregation, maybe old person.
- Examples of what to make:
- book marks
- cards
- flower pictures
- anything you can think of
- stickers
- cookies / biscuits / sandwiches



Physical Activity:

Wall, Rabbit, Bow and Arrow (it’s like playing group rock, paper scissors)

Method:

Create two teams.

The teams must stand in a line facing each other.

Count down from 10-0 (sometimes slow, sometimes fast). Each team should huddle in a circle and quietly (so the other team can’t hear their next move) discuss and decide which action they will us; either a rabbit or a wall or a bow and arrow.

- Rabbit jumps over a wall
- Arrow kills the rabbit
- Wall blocks the bow and arrow.

For each of these, come up with a creative action representing a rabbit, wall and arrow.

Once you completed the countdown and reach 0 and say “go,” each team must immediately all show their action (within each team, they must all do the same action, tell them points will be deducted if members don’t do the same action). The aim to get more points than the other team. Most importantly to have fun.

It can be played 5-6 times and team with highest score wins.

Variation: A version of rock, paper, scissors



This is an example of two teams doing “bow and arrow.” In this case, it’s a draw, so both teams can redo the round until someone wins.

Or

Open gates:

A person\ stands in front of a group of children and then calls out a name someone. The person called must try and get past them without being touched. If the person succeeds, they reach the other side and scream "open gates!" Then, the entire group can run across the field and try not to get touched by the person in the middle. If someone is touched, they join the person in the centre. They are placed in middle and can also help the person try touch someone else. The goal was to get everyone into the centre pack and the degree of difficulty increased as more and more people get caught.

Or

Play fruit salad:

This game needs at least 8 players. Form a circle of chairs that is one chair fewer than the total number of players. Choose a player to be "in" – that player stands in the centre of the circle. Divide all the players into three groups of fruit by going around the group and naming them either an apple, orange or pear. The person who is "in" calls the name of a fruit. If he calls out apples, everyone who is that fruit must get up quickly and change places. People who are not apples remain seated. The person who is "in" tries to sit in an empty spot whenever players swap positions. If they manage to sit on a chair, the person not sitting on a chair is then "in". The person in the middle can also call fruit salad and everyone who is seated has to change spots. The game can finish whenever you like.

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Blind obedience is dangerous!

(The sacrifice of Isaac)

Fifth Sunday of Easter
28 June 2020

Reading: Genesis 22:1-14

Theme: obedience, trust and discernment



Information for the teacher

This is a difficult lesson for a number of reasons. Firstly, we are not familiar with the biblical culture. This story may have been demonstrating a counter culture away from sacrifice and the worship of Baal that was threatening the true worship of Yahweh. A deeper mystery of God is revealed at the end as the sacrifice of Isaac is stopped. Then, for us today the acceptance of patriarchy and the unquestioning right that a man has over all the members of his household could be problematic. However, in the context of Old Testament times patriarchy was the norm and this story demonstrates the obedience of Abraham and the future blessings that come from such unquestioning obedience and faith in God.

Another difficulty is that blind obedience could be seen as negative and blind trust could be a problem. Children might be told to do something by a parent or elder which they do not feel comfortable with and yet they might obey because it is an older person telling them what to do. This could lead to situations of child abuse. At times parents might be wrong and then there is a question as to whether they should be obeyed when they are wrong.

There is a danger that we feel a need to sacrifice to appease God. God is not demanding sacrifice but we think that if we give up chocolate, or do our homework on time God will bless us and give us what we want. We try to bargain with God.

So, in this lesson we examine the nature of obedience. Sacrifice helps us remember that everything belongs to God. Think about the cost of obedience, what would your life look like if you held nothing back from God? What would life look like if you did not try to control everything and trusted God with everything? How do you live your life when the world tells you to live by your own rules? How do you find balance when obedience to parents or those in authority feels wrong and maybe even against what you believe. Sometimes we have to be willing to sacrifice something we love like Abraham and sometimes we have to be Isaac and be willing to be sacrificed.

If we think about Isaac, some scholars believed him to be around the age of 17-20, which would have made Abraham over 100 years old at the time of this sacrifice. Isaac would have been a strong, healthy young man who could have very easily overpowered his elderly dad. But he did not. Why? Because he was obedient. When we obey God, we can know that God will always be there, always provide and that God is always more than enough.

Please note that this lesson does not condone child sacrifice of any kind! It was written at a time when human sacrifice was practiced and it is showing that God is against human sacrifice.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- What does being obedient involve?
- Obedience isn't always easy and to be aware that blind obedience may be dangerous.
- The story of the sacrifice of Isaac.



Attention Grabber: let's talk about trust.

Trust is when you believe someone when they say they will do something and they will do it or say who they are and they are that. Trust is about belief and action confirming that belief.

Another example of trust is (take out a chair) and say 'this is my chair; I've had it for a long time now. Its strong and sturdy and has not broken. I know that when I sit in it, it won't let me fall. So, I trust if I sit in it right now it will hold me.' -Sit in chair- Tada!

Or another example. Have a bag of well-known sweets like fizzers. Say 'every time I eat a fizzer, its sweet and yummy. So, I trust that when I take a bite, it's going to be good' -take a bite-

Maybe there are people you trust. Ask 'why do you trust them?' *(this could be that they always show up when they say they will, they really love me, I can count on them)*



Bible Story and Discussion: Genesis 22:1-14. If possible, read this from a children's bible.

Discussion:

- What does the word obey mean? *(Obedience is behaviour that's respectful and mindful of rules and laws. ... People demonstrate obedience when they follow the law, and children show obedience when they obey their parents and teachers. Obedience is respectful.)*
- What does the word trust mean? *(a belief in the strength or truth of a person or thing. You have earned my trust because you are always honest)*
- How was Abraham obedient? *(answers in teacher info)*
- How was Isaac obedient? *(answers in teacher info)*
- Do you obey your parents or guardians?
- Do you trust that your parents or guardians ask you to do something for your own good? E.g.; when they ask you to clean your room, wash the dishes, take care of your pets, eat ALL your vegetables
- Why do we trust and obey our parents?
- Who do we trust and why?
- Did Abraham sacrifice his son Isaac? *(no, He was instructed to sacrifice a ram instead vs.12-13)*
- Do you know that we should trust and obey God? How do we do that?

- If you had to think of 3 of the most important things to you right now, what place does God come? 1st, 2nd or 3rd? Or doesn't place at all.
- What do you think it means to place God 1st in our lives?



Prayer:

Dear God. Thank you that we can trust you. Thank you for always leading us by example. Help us to choose you first. Help us to listen to you and follow your instructions. We are sorry when we do wrong. Please help us to do better next week. We love you so much! Amen.



Crafts:

What you need:

Scissors

Colouring pencils or crayons.

What you do:

Print out a ram for each child. There is a copy at the ends of this lesson.

Cut out the ram.

The children can colour the ram in.

Fold on the lines.

The ram should be able to stand.



Physical activity: obedience game.

This is very easy and can be done with no props.

This game is giving your class instructions and seeing how well they 'obey' you and then giving them a bad instruction and seeing if they realise this one should not be obeyed.

E.g.:

Ask your class to go and touch the wall and come back.

Turn around 3 times and sit down.

Clap a rhythm of your choice.

Find 2 children and give them a hug/high 5/fist bump etc.

You can increase the instructions to increase the difficulty

e.g.; run and touch the wall, run back, jump up once and sit down.

Then you could say – If I said "hit someone hard" should you obey me. Or break a window? Should you obey?

Remember to make it fun!



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To think about obedience and trust and what they mean for us and who we trust and obey involve?
- Obedience isn't always easy and to be aware that blind obedience may be dangerous.
- The story of the sacrifice of Isaac.



Attention Grabber:

Blind fold maze.

What you need:

Blindfolds

Pencils

Maze- found at the end of the lesson. You can find more challenging ones online.

What you do:

You can either have your whole group participate or one or two volunteers.

Give your children a blindfold and a pencil and tell them that they are going to complete the maze by following your instructions. You say draw a line and stop, turn left, turn right, up, down etc.

The child needs to try to complete the maze within the lines as best they can.

Teach:

A loving God and loving parents create rules that are meant to help us and those around us. Children don't have as much life experience as adults yet. To an even greater scale, we have a very small perspective compared to God's view on life. The blindfold represents us needing a guide. We need to be quiet and listen to know the instructions. When we listen to the voice leading us, we stay on the right path. But we also need to discern that the voice is true and wise.



Bible Story: Genesis 22:1-14



Discussion:

- Who are the main characters in this story? (*Abraham, Isaac and God*)
- What does the word obey mean? (*Obedience is behaviour that's respectful and mindful of rules and laws. ... People demonstrate obedience when they follow the law, and children show obedience when they obey their parents and teachers. Obedience is respectful.*)
- What does the word trust mean? (*a belief in the strength or truth of a person or thing. You have earned my trust because you are always honest*)
- How was Abraham obedient? (*answers in teacher info*)
- How was Isaac obedient? (*answers in teacher info*)

- Who do we trust and why?



Application Questions:

- Think about your lives. Are there any sacrifices you do? E.g., washing the dishes when you haven't been asked to. Have you ever donated or handed down old clothes or toys?
- Has God ever asked you to do something difficult? E.g., confront the school bully with kindness, maybe you feel like God wants you to be a priest or missionary.
- How do you know what you feeling is from God? There are normally three things that happen. You will find comfort in scripture, affirmation, which is when other people support or encourage a decision- sometimes this happens without you telling them anything about the decision! And lastly a strong gut feeling.

This next question should be taken with caution and only with older children.

- in the past few years we have heard and seen pastors do and say some things that aren't biblical. Like the pastor who sprayed parishioners with insect repellent to remove sin from the person. We know this to be nonsense. How do we know we can trust what our priests say to us?
- If someone like a priest or teacher in church say, "God said I need...." but this makes you feel uncomfortable, sad or you know it's wrong what should you do? [\(always tell someone you trust! God will never ask you to do something that will bring harm on you.\)](#)



Prayer: Ask the children to contribute to the prayer, based on what they have learnt from today's lesson.



Craft: chatter box

This is a reasonably easy craft.

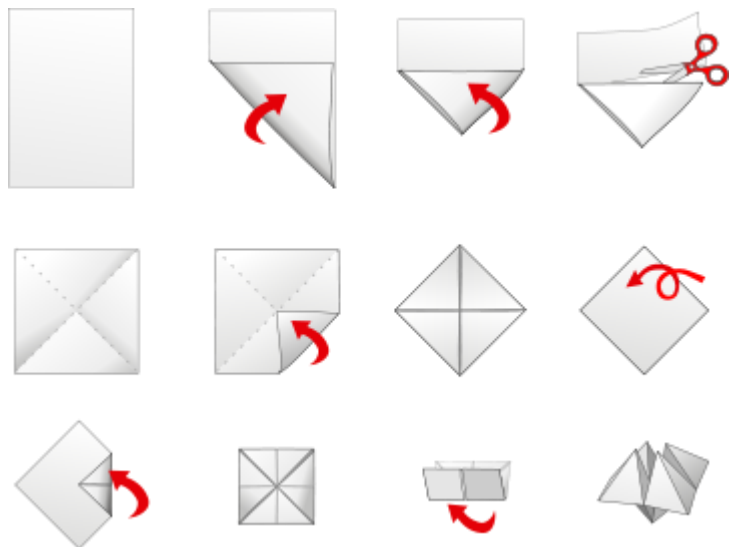
The template can be found at the end of the lesson.

what you need:

- Paper
- Scissors
- Colouring pencils/pens

What you do:

- Cut the paper to make a square.
- Fold the paper diagonally on both diagonals. You should then be able to see a 'X' when you unfold the paper.
- Flip the page over.
- Fold in the corners to the centre
- Flip the page over again. It should look like a smaller square. With 4 blocks
- Fold the corners in again. It should now look like a smaller square with 4 triangles.



- With the corners still folded fold the bottom to the top. You should be able to fit your fingers in the pockets of the paper. Pinch the corners into together to finish your chatter box.

Decorating:

- On each pocket write a number 1-4
- Unfolded the paper and write a word from the lesson, on the triangular folds. e.g. Issac, Abraham, God and Ram
- Lift up the folds and write what happened to that person or object in the story.

How to play with your craft:

Once your craft is complete you can play with it!

Hold your chatter box in your hands and ask someone to choose a number. Count that number by moving your fingers-which will move the chatter box.

Then ask the person to choose a word from the inside. You then lift the fold and can explain what happened to that person or object.



Physical activity:

Red Light, Green light.

This is a classic game that's still creating giggles!

Players all line up at a starting point. The goal is to be the first onto reach the end point — or finish line.

When the leader says "Green!" every player runs. As soon as the leader yells "red" every player has to stop...immediately.

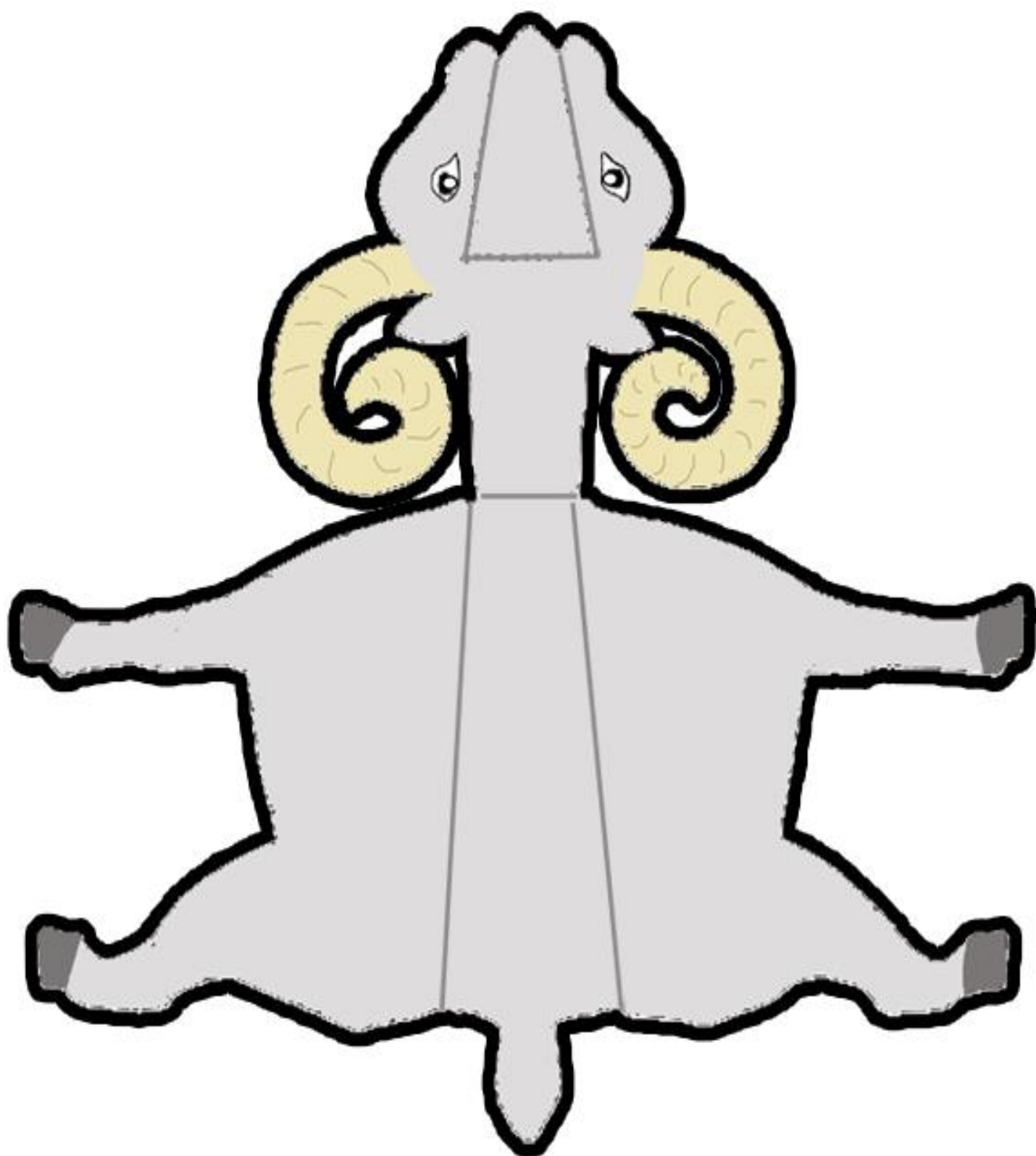
If anyone moves, they are OUT and cannot continue the race. We even yell "yellow" to change things up for a super slow walk.

References:

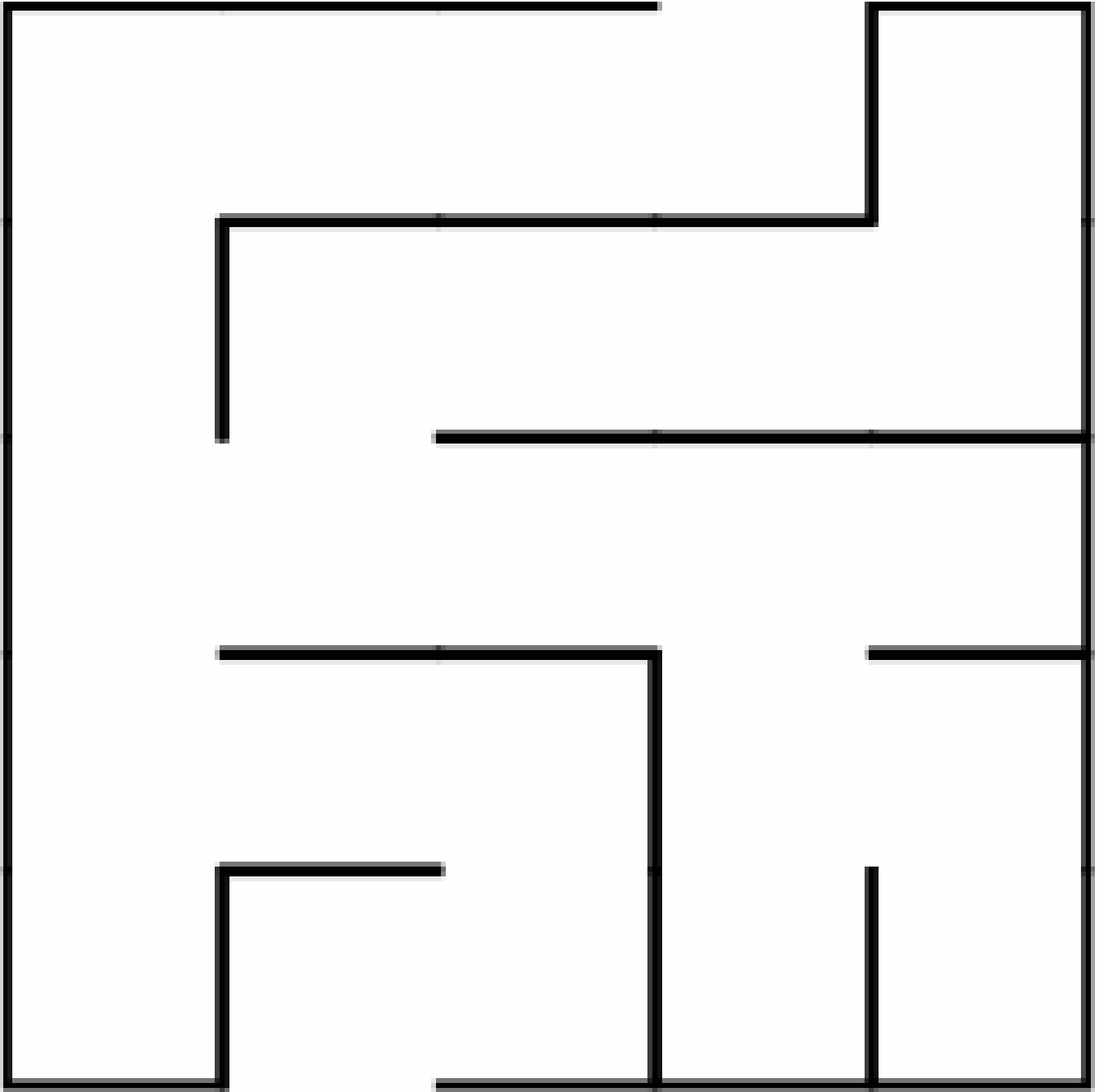
<https://thenewharvest.org.za/category/sermons/sermons-2019/page/4/>

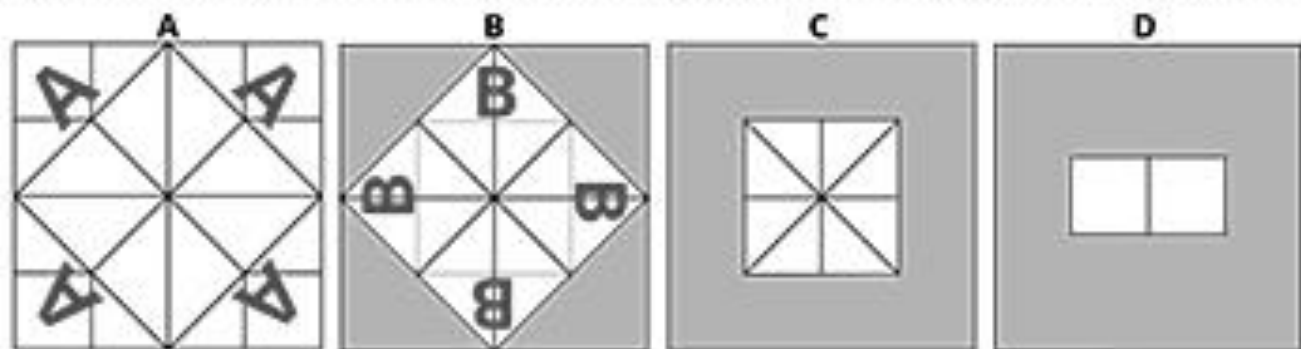
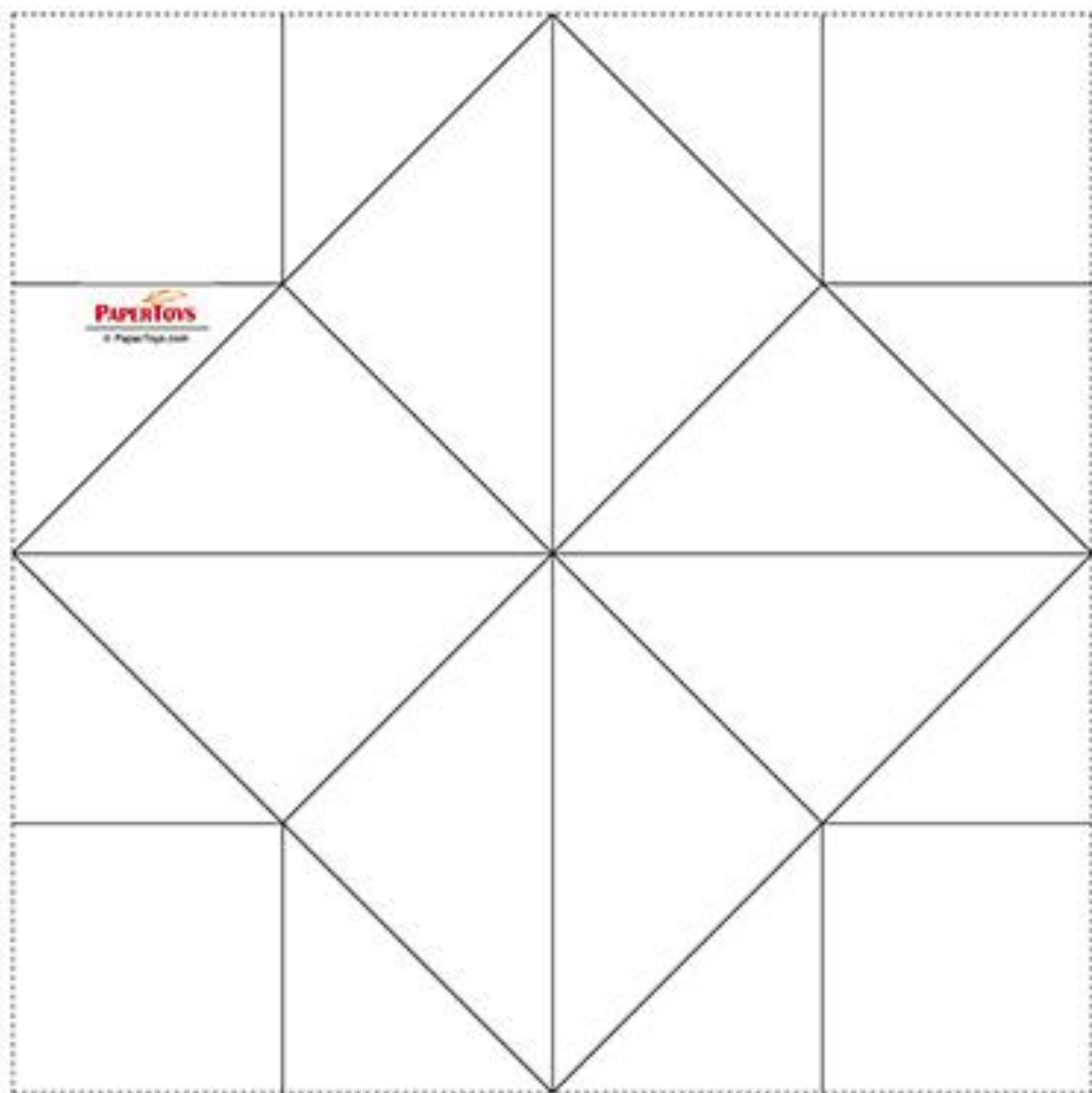
<https://meaningfulmama.com/blindfolded-maze-game-teaches-obedience.html>

The standing ram crafts



The blindfold maze





Folding Instructions

1. Cut out along the dotted lines, fold back four triangular corners (see diagram A)
2. Fold remaining four triangles forward (cover words in the center (see diagram B & C)
3. Fold in half with numbers facing out (see diagram D)