

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Fifth Sunday of Easter
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: John 13:31-35

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." An astounding discovery! The Easter news was spread to all who would listen. The disciples told people, who in turn, told people, and to this day, we hear the message — a message of weeping and then of joy that comes with the morning of a new day. We too like the disciples weep **AND** then delight in the joy bursting forth in us. We too are called to bring this message with our lives, and, if necessary, with words, to those who have not yet heard it.

A notation for this week's Gospel

Soon Jesus will not be appearing so concretely to the disciples. So, does he give them a complex strategic plan? No. He gives them a new commandment, and this will cover all they need to do. The world will recognize them as followers of Jesus because of the way they love each other.

Theme: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

Before Class: Have a Bible or copies of the scripture for today as well as the materials for the icon making. See Easter 2 for a bookmark template. Be thinking of examples of love in your own community to add to what the children will notice. Is there, for example, a person who cares for infants in your church just because they love the children? Has there been a fire or other disaster and people came to the aid of the people involved?

Beginning: Ask the children to give you as many definitions or examples of love that they can think of. Yes, romantic love. What other kinds of love can they think of? Help them to notice love of our planet earth and people who are good stewards, people who volunteer their time or talents, people who are there to help us: firefighters, nurses, etc.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, that you help us notice your love for us, and help us love one another. Amen.

The Story: John 13: 31-35. Ask for a volunteer to read this passage.

Questions:

I wonder what you would say is Jesus' main message today. (Love.)

I wonder what the different kinds of love might be? (invite them to name different kinds of love and then give them the examples below, asking them how each of those are different from one another.

Examples: I love my toys, I love my job, I love my child, and I love Jesus.

Ask them to come up with some categories for types of love: Love that means it gives me pleasure, like my CD player; Love that means love between two people who join their lives together; Love that means really caring about other people and looking for what God sees in them; Love that means doing stuff that needs to be done because you are so grateful to be living on this beautiful planet. Invite the children to come up with their own titles for each. How would they explain this to a classmate, who might not be a Christian, for example.

Which kind of love is Jesus talking about here?

I wonder how we "love" someone we do not even "like?"

Activity: Invite the children to create an icon for one definition of "Love." Make one to remain in class and one of their own to take with them.

Getting Closure: Talk about ways we can show this love for those in our worlds. How can we deal with "that kid" in class we do not like? How can we show love to people in our world? How can we do sneaky loving things in our families?

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for the love you have shown us and for the love we hear about today. Help us to love one another and remember your words as we leave this place today. Amen.

John 13:31-35

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Printed by the Office for Formation and Vocation Ministries of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.