

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 28
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Mark 13:1-8

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

A beautiful building, the Temple –laboriously built and the pride of the people. Impressive now, Jesus agrees, but not one stone will be left upon stone. The kingdom he offers is not about fancy buildings. His kingdom will, however, remain after all else has been destroyed.

Theme: Our Temples and Buildings

Before Class: You will need chenille stems (pipe cleaners), a simple cardboard box (to use as a church), and paper and crayons. Before class, take the cardboard box and cut out a door so the “people” can go inside.

Experiment with creating "people" out of the stems. Here is one way. Take the stem and fold it in half, over your finger, twist to make the head. Go out about an inch on each side and fold the stem back to form arms. Twist the stem a couple of times to make a body. Then the two ends left are the legs, so bend them at the "knee" and then bend tiny feet.

Beginning: Ask the children the name of our church. (If no one knows, you can provide the answer.) Ask them if they have ever seen any other church – here in our town – when they went on a trip, etc. If you are sure they will have seen them, mention other churches in your community. Tell them Jesus had another idea about churches and we will hear about it in our story.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God for bringing us together today and for being with us. Help us to learn more about being your church in the world. Amen.

To Make a Chenille Stem “Person”



Fold the chenille stem in half over your finger and twist the stem once.



For arms; fold the stem back on itself, making arms 1 inch long.



Fold the two long lengths over each shoulder, down each side of head.



Twist the two ends together half-way down to form the body.



Bend arms to form hands; bend legs to form feet. Enjoy!

The Story: Mark 13:1-8 Jesus and his friends have come to the city of Jerusalem and are standing outside the beautiful Temple. The temple was huge – a lot bigger than our church. And people had worked hard for years and years to build it. Jesus' friends were really impressed. "Look, Jesus", they were saying, "Look how huge the stones are and how awesome this building is." Jesus wanted his friends to understand that buildings are good, but we don't need fancy buildings to do the work he wants us to do. So he told his friends that one day this fancy building would all be torn down. And one day it was. The building is gone, but the church continues. I wonder how that can be?

Activity 1: Either show the children how to make the chenille "people" or give each child one you have already fashioned. Then, make a "church" for your people to go to – out of the cardboard box.

Let the children move all their "people" into the "church." Then ask the children if the people could have church out in a park? (Let the children decide where, in your classroom, the "park" is and move the people over there. Could they have church in a house? (The box can be a house, now.)

Then ask the children to help you figure out how to define "church." Keep going until you get that it is the people that are church – the building is nice, but not necessary.

Activity 2: Let's draw a picture of our people "being" church and put it on our wall with our other pictures. We can work on this all together – or each of us can draw a picture.

Getting Closure: Put your pictures on your wall and let the children take their chenille people home with them.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, that you show us how to be church in many different ways. Be with us as we go to be your church in the world. Amen.

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

© 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 28
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Mark 13:1-8

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

A beautiful building, the Temple –laboriously built and the pride of the people. Impressive now, Jesus agrees, but not one stone will be left upon stone. The kingdom he offers is not about fancy buildings. His kingdom will, however, remain after all else has been destroyed.

Theme: Our Temples and Buildings

Before Class: You will need copies of the Bible, paper, and crayons. You may choose to go online and download a full color picture of what modern research indicates the Temple in Jerusalem may have looked like. (www.templemount.org). The site also has photos of what is there today and an artist's rendering of The Ark.

Beginning: Ask the children to tell you about the biggest church they have ever seen. Has any child been to a large cathedral? Would any of them have been to New York City and seen the Cathedral of St. John the Divine? Then, show the children the picture of the Temple in Jerusalem (if you have been able to download a copy). Tell the children that today's Bible story happens just outside that Temple.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for the stories we have from the Bible to help us better understand what you want for us. Amen.

The Story: Mark 13:1-8 If you have sufficient children, four of them can read in unison the parts of the disciples, one can read the part of Jesus, and one the part of the narrator. (See script below)

Reflection Questions:

- Let's assume that this time the disciples had time to really explore the Temple for the first time. Mark writes that the disciples say, simply, "What large stones and what large buildings." I wonder what else they might have said? (Encourage expressions of amazement and wonder.)

- I wonder why Jesus tells the disciples the Temple will soon be demolished? (It did happen about 60 years later.)
- I wonder why Jesus was not concerned about the destruction of the Temple? (He was trying to teach the disciples that the Kingdom of God does not need temples.)
- What do the disciples then ask Jesus? (When is this going to happen and how will we know it is going to happen?)
- Do you think Jesus answered their question? Why, Why not?

Option: Offer the children the opportunity to explore what it means to be church. Pose this pretend situation. A member of our church suddenly comes into a ton of money and decides to give \$ 1,000,000 to our church! Yeah! But this person says this money must be used to build the kind of church Jesus wants.

Invite the children to discuss what the "church" Jesus wants would look like. You can do this in small groups, as a large group, or in twos or threes depending on the size of your group. (Encourage them to think outside the box: would it even be a building at all? How would it help the greater community? Would it make it possible to do things we cannot do now? If several models emerge, encourage the children to sketch their ideas.)

Have paper and supplies there for them to draw up plans or create the building as they see it.

Getting Closure: Gather the sketches the children have drawn of the \$1,000,000 church and ask them to share their favorite part of their creation. Wonder with them about how their buildings or constructions would serve God's mission.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for helping us to understand what it is to be in your kingdom. Amen.

Mark 13:1-8

Narrator: As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him,

Disciple: ‘Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!’

Narrator: Then Jesus asked him,

Jesus ‘Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.’

Narrator: When Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately,

Disciples: ‘Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?’

Narrator: Then Jesus began to say to them,

Jesus: ‘Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, “I am he!” and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.’

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

© 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 28
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Mark 13:1-8

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

A beautiful building, the Temple –laboriously built and the pride of the people. Impressive now, Jesus agrees, but not one stone will be left upon stone. The kingdom he offers is not about fancy buildings. His kingdom will, however, remain after all else has been destroyed.

Theme: Our Temples and Buildings

Before Class: You might want to check out a website on the Temple in Jerusalem for few of us have been to the Holy Land to see it. A good site is www.templemount.org. To print out the map and layout of the temple as well as get some background, see <http://www.templemount.org/theories.html>.

Beginning: Ask the group to consider this thought as they read the passage for today: “Our Church could sometimes be considered to be suffering from a serious case of "Edifice Complex.”

Opening Prayer: Creator God, help us to understand what you call us to be as a church. Help us to understand our place in your mission and ministry. Amen.

The Scripture: Mark 13:1-8 If you brought a printout of the Temple let the group look at it. Then, invite volunteers to read the passage of scripture.

Reflection Questions:

- Assume that this is the first time the disciples had had the time to really tour the Temple. I wonder how you describe their awe at being in this magnificent place.
- I wonder why Jesus so quickly deflected their awe? (Jesus was continuing to teach that his Kingdom was not about hierarchies and palaces. We are to be in awe of God)
- Where are the disciples in verse 3? (Sitting on the Mount of Olives where they had a great view of the Temple.)
- Assume the disciples had a bit of time to try to understand what Jesus had said in verse 2. What do you think the disciples made of Jesus response (verses 5-8) following their question in verse 4?

Option: Discuss the possibility that our church has something of a case of "Edifice Complex." (To have an Edifice Complex means that a public official or administrator has a desire to construct buildings with their name on it as a marker of their place in the community.) To what extent is our building crucial to our ministry? To what extent is it a hindrance to our ministry?

What if we didn't have a building?

If we were to have the opportunity to build an entire new building, what things would we consider essential and what things might we change?

What could we do differently with the building we have that might further God's ministry and mission?

Getting Closure: As we consider what we, this community of believers, is being called to do in Jesus name, let us notice the resources we have – the people who make up our community – and the place where we meet.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for choosing us to belong to your kingdom. Help us to live the life you dream of for us. Remind us to be focused on those with whom we are ministering. Amen.

Mark 13:1-8

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!' Then Jesus asked him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.'

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 'Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?' Then Jesus began to say to them, 'Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.'

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

© 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.