

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.

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