

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C– Third Sunday in Lent**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**  
**RCL Old Testament Readings – Track One**

**Scripture: Exodus 3:1-15**

**Background:** Lent is a reflective season – an opportunity to go deep within ourselves and focus on our relationship with God and with others. The forty days of Lent remind us of the forty days that Jesus spent in the desert following his baptism, pondering who he was and what he was to do. They also remind us of the forty years that the people of God wandered in the desert following the Exodus from Egypt, learning how to be the community of the people of God. The Hebrew Scripture lessons in year C focus on the covenants or promises that God made with the people of God. Like Jesus, we choose to enter this time of “desert,” in order to remember the promises of God, hear the stories of ways in which they were fulfilled (hint: They didn’t always look the way the people expected!), and the ways in which we are called to participate in those promises in our own time – to discover who we are in God and what we are to do.

**A Notation for This Week’s Lesson:** In this week’s lesson, we move forward in time from the story of Abraham, to the time that the people of God are slaves in Egypt. We hear how God calls Moses to lead the people to freedom, and promises to be with Moses as he does this. Through Moses’ action, God will fulfill the promise made to Abraham that his descendants will live in the land that God had given him.

**Theme: God Promises to be with Moses**

**Before Class:** Determine which activity options you will be using and gather the materials needed. You will need the bowl of sand from last week, and a red leaf to place in the sand. (You can use a red leaf that you have found outdoors, obtain an artificial one from a craft store, or cut one out of red construction paper).

**Beginning:** Gather the children in your usual manner, perhaps with an opening song or greeting. Remind them that the seasons of the church year have changed, and it is the time of Lent, the time we set aside to pay attention to the ways in which we come close to God, and to step away from things that separate us from God. Remind the children that through their baptism, they are always a part of God’s great family, “that they are marked as Christ’s own, forever.”

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the gift of Lent, the time we pay special attention to the ways we can come closer to you. Help us to hear your promises, and to remember that we are part of your great family. Amen.

**The Story:** Help the children find Exodus 3 in their Bibles. Note that you have moved on from the book of Genesis (“Beginning”), and that this week’s story takes place many years after last week’s story of Abraham and Sarah. This week’s story takes place during the time that the people of God are living in slavery in Egypt. The book of Exodus tells us the story of the time of slavery, how the people crossed over the Red Sea into freedom, and how they wandered in the

desert for forty years. The word “exodus” is Greek, and literally means “going out,” referencing the “going out” of the people of God from Egypt, into the desert.

Show the children the red leaf. Ask them to listen to see how it comes into today’s story.

Ask what the children remember about Moses. They might remember that as a baby he was hidden in the bulrushes in the river from the Pharaoh’s soldiers, who were under orders to kill Hebrew baby boys. Or that he was adopted by the Pharaoh’s daughter, and raised in the palace. This meant that unlike other Hebrew people, he was not a slave. Prior to today’s lesson, he killed a man and had moved out into the countryside, hiding from both his palace family and his fellow Hebrews. He married, and was working for his father-in-law, tending sheep.

As a class, read Exodus 3:1-15 aloud.

**Reflection Questions:** (Use the ones that interest you and your community of children)

- I wonder how Moses felt when he saw the bush was on fire?
- I wonder how Moses felt when he heard God talking to him?
- I wonder how God heard the cries of the people who were slaves?
- I wonder why Moses was afraid to go back to Egypt?
- I wonder what happened next?
- I wonder what God sounds like to you?
- I wonder why we call these red plants “burning bushes?” I wonder how they help us remember this story?

**Activity Options:**

1. **Mobile or Story bag:** Each story in the coming weeks lends itself to a symbol, which can be created to hang on a mobile or to fill a story bag that the children can take home at the end of Lent to remember the promises of God. (The symbols will be a star, a red leaf, stones, a portion of a map or a road, and a cross.) *The symbol for this week is a red leaf.*
  - a. **For the Mobile:** You will need the embroidery hoop hanger that you created the first week of Lent. You will need to be prepared for children who were not here that week, either by helping them create the hanger (directions in week 1), or by having a few hangers prepared for them. Draw a large leaf for each child on a piece of construction paper or cardstock. Have the child cut out the leaf (or pre-cut it for younger children). Punch a hole in the top of the leaf with a hole punch, and string yarn through the hole. Have the child decorate the leaf while you talk about the reflection questions for the story. You could use red paint, or glue red/orange tissue paper on the base leaf or simply decorate the leaf with crayons or markers. Tie the yarn to the embroidery hoop so that it hangs down.
  - b. **For the Story bag:** You will need a small cloth bag for each child. (These would be easy to make, or can be found inexpensively at craft stores. Burlap or muslin would be good choices to reflect the colors of the desert.) Prepare the leaf as above for the mobile, eliminating the hole punch and yarn. Have the child cut out and decorate the leaf while you talk together about the reflection questions. Add the star to the story bag.

2. **Journal:** An inexpensive journal can be created for each child to use during Lent. Composition books work well, or you might simply gather several pieces of notebook paper, and make construction paper covers by stapling them together down the sides. Journaling can be in words or pictures, and can be free-form, or follow a prompt. Possible prompts for this week: *Tell about a time when everything seemed hopeless, frightening and/or impossible. What strange things have you seen or experienced in nature? I wonder what God sounds like to you? I wonder if you have ever been in a place that you felt was holy?* Alternatively, the journal could also be a place for exploring possible Lenten disciplines, such as prayer, fasting, or charitable giving.
3. **Congregational Project:** If your congregation takes on a particular project for Lent, consider how to incorporate that into your class time.

**Getting Closure:** Gather in your story area as you prepare to end class. This can be a good time to share concerns and prayers. You might choose to again remind each child that they are a child of God through the tracing of an invisible cross on their foreheads.

**Closing Prayer:** (This can be done as a body prayer by placing your hands on the mentioned body part as you pray.)

God be in my head and in my understanding.  
God be in my eyes and in my seeing.  
God be in my mouth and in my speaking.  
God be in my heart and in my loving.  
God be in my hands and in my touching.  
God be in my legs and in my moving.  
God be in my life and in my journey.  
Amen.

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