SUNDAY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM

AND

LESSON PLANS



TERM 2

2014

INTRODUCTION

To all Sunday School Teachers

Welcome to the second book in our Anglican series of Sunday school lessons. We hope that you found the lessons for the first term 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. Our Lenten theme entitled "God's reconciliation with humankind" which began in the first term continues briefly into the second term, ending on Palm Sunday.

This term our focus is on equipping ourselves to go out into the world and on living a life for Jesus. Our lessons also include the festivals that we celebrate at this time of year i.e. Palm Sunday and Holy Week, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost and Trinity.

We have, as in our first book, tried to base as many of our lessons on the lectionary readings for a particular Sunday –please refer to page 3 of this manual for more on our curriculum.

Our lessons are packed with ideas, so choose activities that best suit your class' needs and use these ideas as a springboard to create a lesson that works for you! Refer to other resources for ideas as well if you are able. A section on how to prepare a lesson can be found on page 4.

We hope that you find great spiritual fulfilment as you prepare your lessons and teach your children. Please do send any comments you have to the Anglican Diocese Website (www.anglicanjourg.org.za) – look for the link to the Sunday school / Children's Ministry.

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)

About this Curriculum

We believe that we have designed a curriculum that is unique to other Sunday school programmes. We aim to provide the children with a firm knowledge of stories from both the New and Old Testaments, while at the same time, observing the Seasons of the Anglican Church and the readings as set out in the lectionary.

As Anglicans, we would very much like to follow the lectionary as closely as possible as it offers a richness to our faith. There are, however, a number of obstacles associated with this when trying to design a Sunday school Curriculum:

- The Sunday Lectionary readings do not always follow on from one week to the next hence the children do not get a sense of the chronological order of events of the Bible.
- Not all the Bible stories that children should know are covered in the Sunday readings.
- Stories that come up during the holiday period are never covered.
- Sometimes two stories that we would like to cover come up in the same week e.g. The Story of Jacob and Esau and Jesus feeds the five thousand (Year A, 18th Sunday of the Year) , while other weeks may have readings that are not that applicable to children.

This curriculum has been devised to follow all the stories and themes for a year as prescribed in the lectionary, but not necessarily the order of the lectionary. Topics that do correspond with the lectionary reading for the day have been indicated with a *.

Each year will begin with stories relating to the life of Jesus, miracles and parables. We will then move into Lent with topics relating to a special Lenten theme. After Easter the topics chosen for the second term will relate to going out into the world to live a life for Jesus. The third and fourth term will focus on the Old Testament stories.

The section from the Old Testament that the lectionary focuses on for a particular year will be covered:

- Year A: The Creation through to Joseph
- Year B: Joshua through to Samson
- Year C: The Prophets.

The last few lessons of each year are devoted to Advent and Christmas.

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

Term 2 2014

	Date	Week in Church year	Lesson	Page
Lenten Theme : God's Reconciliation with Humankind				
1	13 April	Palm Sunday (Sixth Sunday in Lent)	Mission Accomplished! (Palm Sunday)*	6
	20 April	Easter	No lesson	
Going out into the world and living a life for Jesus				
2	27 April	Second Sunday of Easter	Believe it or not! (Doubting Thomas)*	17
3	4 May	Third Sunday of Easter	Seeing is believing (The road to Emmaus)*	26
4	11 May	Fourth Sunday of Easter	Jesus the Good Shepherd	37
5	18 May	Fifth Sunday of Easter	When the going gets tough! (The stoning of Stephen)*	51
6	25 May	Sixth Sunday of Easter	A walk through the Bible	59
7	1 June	Seventh Sunday of Easter	The Ascension*	69
8	8 June	Pentecost	A Church is born (Pentecost)*	76
9	15 June	Trinity Sunday	Three in One (The Trinity)*	80
10	22 June	Second Sunday after Pentecost	Use your talents (Parable of the talents)	92

Lessons that correspond for with lectionary reading for the day have been indicated with a *.

Gauteng School Term: 7 April – 27 June 2014



Mission accomplished!*



Palm Sunday to Easter
Sixth Sunday in Lent
April 13

Readings: *Matthew 21: 1-11; Matthew 26: 14 -30*
Themes: *Celebrating Jesus*
Memory verses: *"Hosanna to the Son of David! (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord)" Matt 21: 9b*
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)



Information for the teacher:

This is the final lesson of our Lenten Theme, "God's reconciliation with humankind". Throughout this theme we have explored how God provides a perfect world for us. We, however, constantly sin and move away from God. God, who has an infinite love for us, constantly tries to draw us back to Him.

God's ultimate plan was to send Jesus into the world to show us how to live. Throughout Term 1 we learnt about Jesus' life and His teachings. His followers grew as they came to recognise Jesus as their servant king.

However there were people who did not like what Jesus preached. Teachers of the Law and religious leaders (known as Pharisees) did not believe Jesus' claim that He was the Son of God, the person who was to save them. They also did not like it that Jesus criticised the way they behaved – they followed the letter of the law very closely rather than the spirit of the law and they exploited the poor rather than focussing on loving people. Jesus confronted the religious and social structures of exclusion. He challenged the teachers of the law and the whole temple system that created divisions between people and excluded gentiles, women and slaves. As a result, these religious leaders plotted to find a way to stop Jesus' teaching.

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week which culminates in Good Friday, the day when we remember Jesus' crucifixion. Jesus enters Jerusalem, the final leg of his journey on earth. Every action is deliberate as referred to in Zechariah 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey." *(www.dltk-bible.com)*

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To celebrate Jesus' life on earth.
- To take the children on a trip to Jerusalem.
- To teach them that Jesus loves us so much that he died for us.



Attention Grabber:

Procession: If your church has a Palm Sunday procession, have the children join in waving Palm branches or any other branch. If not, have your own procession with children shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David.

Or

Animal noises: Ask the children to make the noise of two or three farm animals then ask them what noise does a donkey make? Then ask them to guess which animal is mentioned in the story.



Bible Story: (Matt 21: 1- 11 – use a Children's Bible to relate the story)

Remind the children of some of the important aspects of Jesus' life from being born in a stable with lots of other animals; healing the sick; doing miracles; to the final part of his journey on earth before going to his Father in heaven. Explain that even though He did good things, there were some people who didn't like what He did and planned to kill Him. Explain that one of the last places he visited was Jerusalem. Now re-enact the story with them.

You will need branches; old clothes, a make believe donkey (use a mop with the face of a donkey on it) and a sign marked Jerusalem hung in another corner of the room

- Give some of the children (the crowd) branches. Choose a few to be disciples and one to be Jesus.
- Tell them today is a special day. It's Palm Sunday and you'll be taking them on a journey to Jerusalem with Jesus and his friends, the disciples. Say that Jesus is going to Jerusalem because it's an important time for him.
- Send two children to get the mop (preferably tied up) and bring it to you.
- Explain that Jesus is riding on a donkey. A crowd welcomes Him into Jerusalem – He is their King! Have the crowd lay the old clothes on the ground for Jesus to walk over, then wave palm branches while shouting, "Hosanna".
- Tell them that there were also children in the crowd waving branches.

**Question and Discussion time:**

- Who was in the story?*(Jesus, his disciples and a big crowd)*
- Where was Jesus going?*(To Jerusalem)*
- What was Jesus riding on?*(A donkey)*
- What did the people shout?*(Hosanna)*
- What were the people holding? *(Palm branches)*
- *Do they think Jesus was happy?* Yes and no. Yes because he was doing what his father wanted and no because he knew that there were some people who wanted to kill him. Tell them that Jesus was also a bit sad because one of his special friends was planning to "tell on him". Do you know who? *(Judas)*

**Sing:** **We have a king who rides a donkey**

(tune: what shall we do with the drunken sailor)

We have a King who rides a donkey (x3)
And His name is Jesus

Jesus, the King is risen (X3)
Early in the morning

What happened next? Now continue the story.

- Explain that Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on the Sunday. He had a special supper with his friends which we celebrate on Thursday of Holy Week. When they arrived for their meal he washed their feet because they were very dirty. Even though he was a very important person, he washed his friend's feet to show that he cared for them. He was the King washing the feet of the people.
- Jesus also prayed to God and told the people that they must love God and love one another just as he loved everyone.
- By the end of the week the people who didn't like Jesus killed Him. On which day did this happen? ((Good) Friday).
- However, today we are celebrating Jesus and we're happy because he is our king and he did many good things. Even though he died it was to save us from our sins. We also celebrate because Jesus was dead for only 3 days and then he went to be with his Father in heaven.
- What do we celebrate on Easter Day? (Jesus is alive – He rose from the dead)

**Crafts:**

- Colouring in - See pg 12
- Make a palm – see pg 13 – this craft is too difficult for the very little ones – teachers, you will need to *cut out the leaves for the little children. Perhaps use white paper so that the children can colour the palm in*

**Song:** Give me Joy in my heart (Sing Hosanna).

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we thank you for your Son, Jesus. We thank you that he came to show us how to live. Jesus, we thank you for dying for our sins. We love you. Amen

Did you know? If you look closely at a donkey's back, you will see a cross. Isn't that amazing?! (Teachers, try to show the children a picture of an actual donkey and have them look for the cross)

Additional Game:
Use 'animal snap' card game or use cards with animal pictures (2 of each). Try to ensure your cards involve a donkey! Ask the children to sit in a circle. Hand out all the cards and tell the children not to show their friends their cards. If they have 2 of the same cards tell them to place them in the circle. Child A then takes one card from child B, then child B takes from the next person all the while matching up the pairs and placing them in the circle. The child who gets rid of all his/her cards first is the winner.

Skit: A skit appears at the end of this lesson which could be fun to include.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To teach children about Jesus' last days on earth
- To remind them that he died for our salvation because he loves us

**Attention Grabber:**

Procession: If your church has a Palm Sunday procession, have the children join in waving Palm branches or any other branch. If not, have your own procession with children shouting, "Hosanna. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord".

Or

Follow Jesus on the way to Jerusalem:
Have pictures of footprints each with the name of a key place in Jesus' journey. Place these on the floor in the room. Have the children follow the footsteps. As they step on each one, remind them of the significance of that place.

Bethlehem: Birthplace; revelation to the World
Jerusalem: Jesus presented in the temple
Nazareth: Hometown of Jesus
Galilee (Region): Baptised in the river Jordan; Jesus begins his work; performs 1st miracle; Calls 4 fishermen on the Lake; teaches through parables.
Jerusalem: Enters on a donkey with people shouting and praising him; the Last supper with the disciples. Tried in Jerusalem and crucified outside the walls of the City.



Bible Story and discussion

- Begin by reminding the children that this is the final lesson of our Lenten Theme. Throughout this theme we have explored how God provides a perfect world for us. We, however, constantly sin and move away from God. God, who has an infinite love for us, constantly tries to draw us back to Him. His ultimate plan was to send Jesus into the world to show His people how to live. Today we will follow the final week of Jesus' life on Earth.
- Have a volunteer read Matthew 21: 1-13, then ask "why do you think Jesus was going to Jerusalem?"(*for the Passover festival)*



Sing:

- We have a king who rides a donkey
- Hosanna

Continue:

- So, Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem on the Sunday for the festival of Passover. Why was He welcomed so warmly? *(Jesus was their King, the person who had come to save them).*
- What happened that by Friday of that week, Jesus was nailed to a cross – how could He have become so unpopular?*(allow children to offer suggestions)*

Well, while Jesus had many followers, he also had many people who didn't like what He said. Teachers of the Law and religious leaders known as Pharisees did not believe that Jesus' was the Son of God, the person who was to save them. *(Jesus was not the King they were expecting – after all, He had been born in a stable, not a palace. He rode a donkey, not a chariot and He spoke about riches in Heaven, not on earth)*

Furthermore, Jesus did not like the way these people behaved – they followed the law very closely rather than focussing on loving people. He criticised their behaviour which they did not like.

These religious leaders plotted to find a way to stop Jesus' teaching.

Meanwhile, Jesus continued His teachings on how to live. During that week, Jesus also sat down to supper with His 12 disciples. This is referred to as the 'Last Supper'.

On what day was this? *(Maundy Thursday – The word Maundy comes from the Latin word which means "commandment" and refers to the commandment which Jesus gave in John 15:12, "Love each other as I have loved you)*

Read Matthew 26: 20-28. Emphasise verses 26, 27 and tell the children that these are the same words which the Priest says during the preparation for communion. We say this each time to remember Jesus and his last meal.

At the table where Jesus sat, one of the disciples had been approached by the religious leaders. They wanted to know where Jesus was so they could arrest Him.

Q: Which disciple betrayed Jesus? *(Judas)*
How much did they pay Judas to betray Jesus? *(30 silver coins)*
Would you have sold out Jesus like that?

Now continue. After supper Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray as all of this was becoming too much for him and he needed to speak to his Father. But when he returned, he found all of the disciples sleeping. He then said to them, "***Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation".***

Shortly after this, Jesus was arrested like a common thief. On the Friday, He was tried by Pilate and then crucified even though he had done nothing wrong. After he died, some of the guards who were there said, "Truly, this was the Son of God".

Explain that even though this seems terrible and very sad, God had a plan. By Jesus dying for us, our sins are forgiven and we are able to be reunited with God. God has once again, drawn us back to Him. This story demonstrates how much Jesus loves us.

MEMORY VERSE:*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)*

Is this the end of the Easter Story? *(No! On the Sunday after the crucifixion, the rock to the tomb had been rolled away and the body of Jesus was no longer there. Jesus had risen from the dead!*

So from this we can believe everything that Jesus told us – He is the Son of God, the King of Kings!



Craft: Have a church member, grandparents or a parent teach the children how to make palm crosses or look on the internet for instructions.





Prayer: Give children the opportunity to write their own prayer.



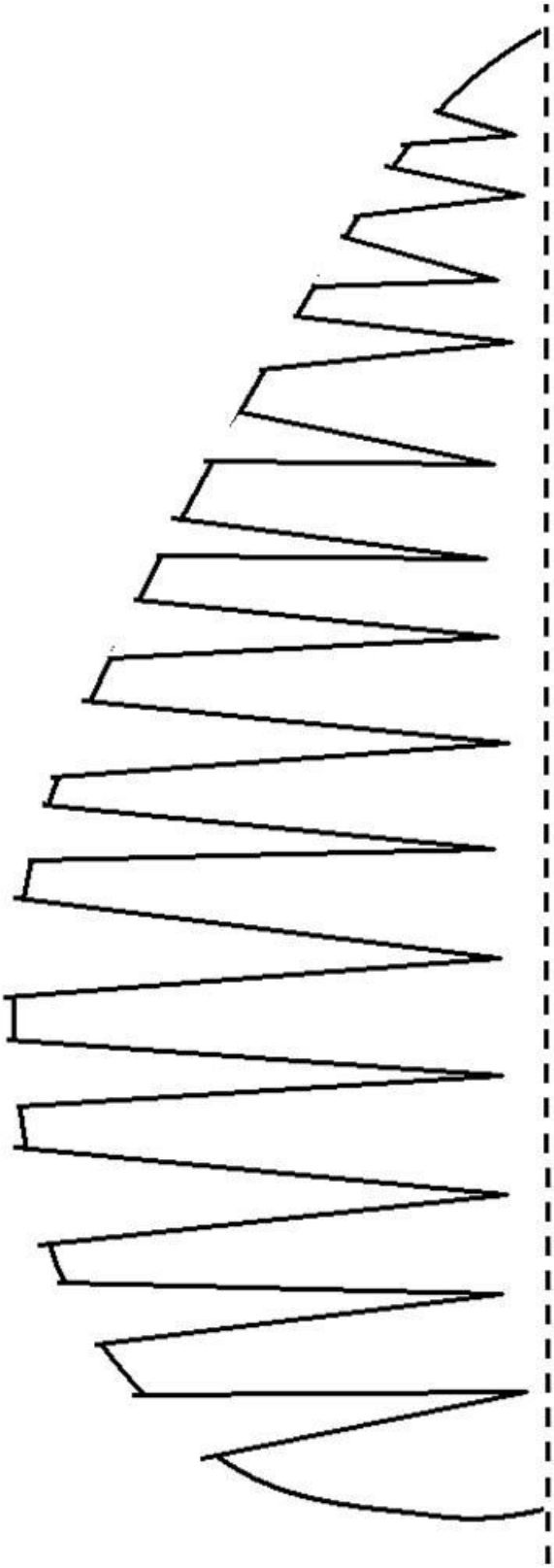
Additional Song: Lord of the Dance

Skit: A skit appears at the end of this lesson which could be fun to include.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY



“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”



Paper Palm Leaf

Cut this template along the dotted line.

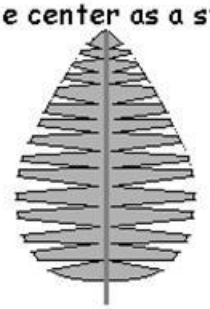
Fold a piece of green construction paper in half and paper clip the template so the dotted line is along the fold.

Cut through the template and both layers of construction paper along the black lines.

Discard the template (unless you want to make more leaves).

Unfold the construction paper to see your finished palm leaf.

Optional: Tape a green pipe cleaner or thin rolled tube of construction paper to the center as a stem.



WORD SEARCH



D V J E R U S A L E M F F N R
V D L A R W J N F M M N Z U C
I J M I M O L K A T J K N P O
L R D O C K D Z P M W L J W D
L O T Z K R D I T A E Z P I N
A J H G Y E O W Y X M K T P F
G T N G S X F W G M F O J X N
E I H S Y C I Z D W S L U C J
K P E X B O L I V E S W I N G
Y L X K P I P C H Y L C O L T
B X S Q T S Z C E A T R E E S
C D L U W G N K F O A L X R T
Z P O A O A N K H I G H E S T
I H H P R O X B P J U I M B V
S A E B D V H H O S A N N A R



Jerusalem	donkey	crowd	hosanna
mount	colt	trees	highest
olives	foal	branches	blessed
village	king	shout	name

SKIT

One Boy's Donkey

by Len

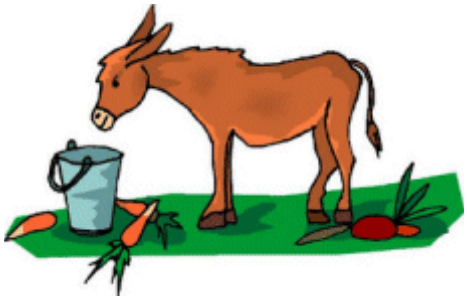
A skit about how a boy's young donkey went from ordinary to extraordinary because of our Lord Jesus.

Skit for three - four: Father, Stable Owner, Young Boy, Narrator

Materials:
3 puppets
(father, stable owner and young boy)
Stuffed donkey (optional)

Or skit can be performed by 4 children: (Father, stable owner, young boy, narrator)

Duration:
Approximately 15 minutes



Topics:
Easter, Palm Sunday, Worship

Target Audience:
Grades 2-6 (Ages 7-12)

Click here for Skit only

Narrator:	Our story is about a boy who was very fond of horses. He continually begged his father to buy one for him. He wanted a horse so much, he saved every coin he earned to help pay. One day, he believed he had saved up enough and went to his father.
Son:	Father, I know horses cost a lot of money, but I think I have earned enough to buy one. See, I have two denari already!
Father:	Son, I'm glad you have the money, but I'm afraid that won't be nearly enough.
Son:	Alright, I'll keep working then, I particularly like the kind of horse that the Roman soldiers ride on.
Father:	Keep working son, one of these days you will have your own special horse!
Narrator:	The boy's father left the room with a mysterious smile on his face. Actually, he went to the only stable in town that had horses for sale. When he arrived, he saw a nice young horse that was just the right size for his son.
Stable Owner:	No, no, this one is not for sale! I'm sorry. We don't have any more horses for sale. The Roman governor bought all of them yesterday for his soldiers.
Father:	Oh no, my son will be disappointed. I was planning on giving him a horse as a surprise birthday gift.
Stable Owner:	My friend, your son is too young even for a young horse like this. I tell you what. I have a young donkey here that has never been ridden, but he is gentle and well behaved. My very own son took care of him as if he were a Roman soldier's horse. My son's too busy now working in the stables of the governor, so he can't take care of a donkey anymore. Maybe your son would like him.
Father:	I'm sure he would.
Stable Owner:	I'll give it to you free if you're interested, but you must also agree to take the young donkey's mother and care for her as well.
Father:	Wonderful, thank you, I'll take them!
Narrator:	The father looked at the young donkey, smiled, and talked to it as if the animal could understand him.
Father:	Hmmm, you're kind of plain looking, but hey, you're free! You'll do for a small boy. I should save your first ride for my son. Let's go!
Narrator:	With that, he walked along side the donkeys and headed towards home. When he arrived, he

proudly presented the young donkey to his son and explained how he once belonged to the stable owner's son.

Son: *(Whining)* But it's not a horse father. How can I become a respected rider with a little donkey? Famous people don't ride on a donkey.

Narrator: The boy walked away, broken-hearted. His father, feeling sad, spoke gently to the donkey.

Father: How can I make my son accept you? You're small and you have no experience. You look timid, you look too friendly, you look so ….oh forget it.

Narrator: Then he tied the donkeys to a tree and went inside his house. Moments later he heard a knock on the door and outside were two men. He let them in and talked to them. When they left, he had a strange expression on his face.

Hours passed when suddenly his son came running up to the house with his friends. They all had palm branches in their hands and were singing joyfully.

Son: Father, come with us! The King is here! Everyone is along the roadside waiting for him.

Father: What do you mean the King?

Son: Jesus, the King, remember? He is at the gate and everyone is rejoicing. Let's go and see Him!

Father: Praise the Lord, He is coming! Let's hurry!

Narrator: Along the road, everyone was singing praises and waving palm branches. The children sang loudly and everyone shouted…

Everyone: Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Son: Father, look! Jesus is almost here!

Father: Son, Look closely. Jesus is riding on a little donkey!

Son: *(Sobbing with joy)* Yes father, the King is riding on my very own donkey

References:

http://www.sunday-schoolfunzone.com/freelessons/palmsunday

http://ministry-to-children.com/palm-sunday-preschool

http://www.dltk-bible.com/guides/people_wave_palms.htm

http://www.kidssundayschool.com

Believe it or not (Doubting Thomas) *

Second Sunday of Easter
20 April

Reading: *John 20: 19 -31*
Theme: *faith*
Memory verses: *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, a week after Easter, focuses on the appearance of Jesus, after He had risen from the dead, to His disciples, particularly to doubting Thomas. This lesson also focuses on what we mean by faith and what we as Christians believe.

We learn from today's lesson that Thomas doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus however understood Thomas' reason for doubting – some people need more proof in order to believe and Jesus cared enough for Thomas to provide him with the proof He needed.

It is from this passage in the Bible that we learn that it is not necessarily bad to question our faith, and in fact, it is often through questioning that a deepening of faith can occur. There are many people who are not Christians and so it is important that we as Christians are sure of what we believe so that we are able to defend our faith and in so doing perhaps convince others of our beliefs.

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 learn about Doubting Thomas



Attention Grabber:

Use this Attention Grabber 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: John 20: 19 -31. Preferably use a Children's Bible to tell this story.



Discussion:

- What holiday have we just celebrated? (Easter!)

(Quickly review the Easter story with the children - Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a tomb. On the Sunday morning after He had died some women went to found His tomb and found that it was empty! Jesus was alive again!)

- 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.
- What did Jesus say to them? *(Jesus said "Peace be with you." When do we hear those words in Church?)*

- After this He showed them His hands and His side? Why do you think He showed His disciples His hands and His side? *(Jesus wanted to show His friends the places where the nails had hurt Him.)*

- The Disciples were overjoyed when they saw Him.

- Unfortunately one of the Disciples was not with them. Which one?*(Thomas)*
- The Disciples tried to tell Thomas about it later. 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 you have said? *(Wait for answers)*

- A week later, Jesus appeared to all of the disciples. Was Thomas there this time? *(Yes!)*
- Jesus showed Thomas His hands and His side and Jesus told Thomas, "Stop doubting, and believe."

- Thomas believed! Thomas said to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" He didn't doubt anymore. Why? *(Because he had seen with his own eyes that Jesus was alive. He had seen Jesus' hands and His side that had been pierced during the Crucifixion.)*

- We can believe too! Do you believe that Jesus is alive? *(Yes!)*
- Why do we believe that Jesus is alive? *(The Bible tells us so!)*

- 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 now in Heaven; Jesus will come again one day and take us with Him to Heaven; God sent us the Holy Spirit to be with us everyday)

**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 He will come again one day and take us to Heaven.
Amen

**Song:** I believe in Jesus (See the older children's lesson for the words)



Crafts: (Theses crafts remind us of the basis of our faith – Jesus died for our sins and then rose again.)

- Colour a picture of the cross and resurrection scene – a picture is included at the end of this lesson.
- 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 the story of doubting Thomas
- To know what is meant by faith
- To know what we believe as Christians



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: Read John 20: 19 -31



Discussion

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. Children should repeat the story in their own words to ensure that they have been listening and understand the events.



Questions:

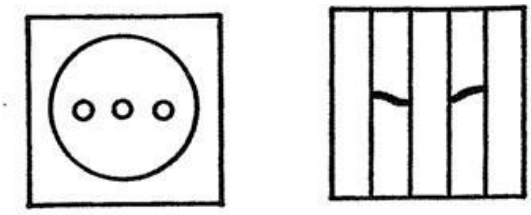
- What is meant by a doubting Thomas?
  (It is someone who doubts something; who does not believe what he has been told until he sees it for himself or is given proof)

- 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.

- What is the meaning of faith?
  (It is what we believe without seeing. Faith is trusting God to explain the things you don't understand yet.)

- Can you remember the lesson about faith that we learnt last term? Jesus had said we needed faith the size of a particular seed. Which seed is it? *(mustard)*
  Thomas did not show any mustard seed faith.

- 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.)

- 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 which is not too long but includes everything we should know about our faith.

  As you read out the Apostles' Creed, encourage those who know it to join in with you.

The Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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.



Song:

I believe in Jesus
I believe He is the Son of God
I believe He died and rose again
I believe He paid for us all

And I believe that He's here now,
Standing in our midst
With the power to heal now
And the grace to forgive



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 Jesus for appearing to His disciples after He had risen from the dead and also for performing miracles. Also thank God for the people who recorded these miraculous events, so that we may also believe. Pray that we may also accept by faith that Jesus has risen from the grave and that He is alive!



Application Questions:
(For 11– 13 year olds)

- Do you find that you are sometimes a Doubting Thomas?
  Sometimes we may doubt our faith - it's not always easy to believe, especially when so many others around us do not believe the good news.

- Was Jesus angry with Thomas for doubting?
  (No! He told Thomas to touch His hands and sides to prove to him self that Jesus really was alive. Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared to them and so it is also important to note that Jesus cared enough for Thomas to appear again to the disciples, this time when Thomas was there – Thomas needed to touch Jesus' hands and sides before he could believe.)

- Is it bad to sometimes doubt our faith?
  (No - Some people need to doubt before they believe. If doubt leads to questions and questions lead to answers, then doubt has done good work and this then leads to a deepening of faith.)

- Which verse in the passage we read today shows us that God understands if we have difficulty believing all Jesus told us, especially without seeing for ourselves?*(John 20:29)*

- Again referring to the passage read today, how does the Bible help to strengthen our faith?
  (John 20:30 - The Bible says that Jesus went on to perform many miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples that are written in the Bible that you may believe.)

- 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.)

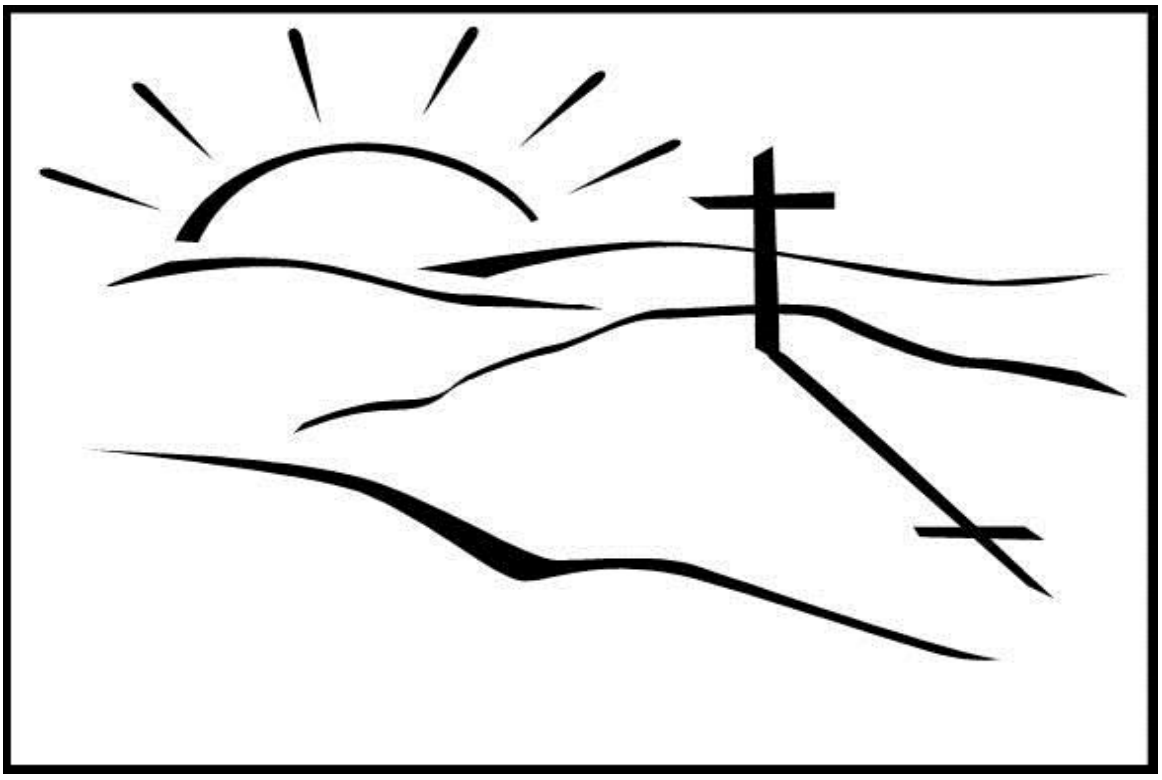
Just for fun!

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. 50 years ago, M&M's were 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)

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



The Apostle's Creed

I believe in _____, the Father almighty,

creator of _____ and earth.

I believe in _____, his 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 _____.

Seeing is Believing
(Road to Emmaus) *

Third Sunday of Easter
4 May

Readings: *Luke 24: 13-35*
Theme: *faith*
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 in fact Jesus. This encounter with the risen Christ so inspired them that they immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples the good news that Jesus was alive.

There are different messages one can find in this reading. The simplest being that once the disciples were able to recognise Jesus, they returned to Jerusalem to share the good news with their friends. This is the message used for the younger children in today's lesson. The message conveyed to the older children is how amazing it is that Jesus is the embodiment of the 300 prophecies made about Him in the Old Testament.

From the beginning, Jesus' dying on the cross and being raised to life was God's plan to bring humankind back to Himself.Throughout history, God made promises to His people about the Special One who would come to be the Saviour of the world. These promises are called PROPHECIES. There are hundreds of prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. When Jesus came, He fulfilled every single prophecy that was told about Him.

How is it that people still failed to recognise Jesus for who He was? The Jews thought that their messiah would be a King who would free them politically, make them a great nation. They did not expect their Messiah to be a suffering servant.

Even the disciples were puzzled about what had happened to their hero. As they walked along the road to Emmaus, they were dejected as the one whom they loved had been crucified - the one who was going to redeem Israel was now dead. Jesus joined them as they walked but they did not recognise Him. It was only after sharing a meal that they were able to put the pieces of the puzzle into order. It was only then that they could understand the scriptures and know Jesus truly was the Son of God

Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke 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 for ministry.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

(It is suggested that the 8 to 10 year olds follow the younger children's lesson today)

Lesson Objectives:

- To learn about the story of the Road to Emmaus
- To know that we should share the good news that Jesus is alive and is our friend.
- To know that Jesus walks with us



Bible Story:

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.

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.

They had to tell everyone they knew the wonderful news that Jesus was alive!
We can be happy and tell others about Jesus.

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

**Discussion:**

- Who do you tell good news to? *(Friends, family, etc)*
- Share how we need to tell the best news of all...Jesus!
- How do you witness? *(By what you say and by way you live)*
- Talk about what it would be like if you had Jesus with us in the room right now. Would it change the words that we said? ; The things that we do? Talk about it and point out that Jesus is always with us, even if we don't see Him.

**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 their name on it 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 and grape juice, give thanks, break it and give each child some. Also give them some grape juice. Explain that this is what Jesus did at his last meal with his 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:** **I want to walk with Jesus Christ**

I want to walk with Jesus Christ
All the days I live of this life on earth
To give to Him complete control
Of body and of soul

Follow Him, follow Him, yield your life to Him
He has conquered death, He is King of kings
Accept the joy which He gives to those
Who yield their lives to Him



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 end of this lesson for a game for 8 – 10 year olds



Older children (7 – 13 years):

(It is suggested that the 8 to 10 year olds follow the younger children's lesson today)

Lesson objectives:

- To learn about the story of the Road to Emmaus
- To realise that Jesus' death and resurrection fulfilled all God's promises.
- To look for Jesus in the world around you.



Attention Grabber:

1. Make copies of the following picture:



The children need to stare at the four black dots in the centre of this picture for about 15 seconds. Close your eyes and keep them closed until an image appears.
What did you see? *(You should see an image of Jesus)*

Or

2. Make a number of puzzles from the pictures given at the end of the lesson. Paste it onto a piece of cardboard. Cut into 16 pieces and let the class make up the puzzle, without showing them the picture to begin with.


Bible Story: Luke 24: 13 -35. (Read this Bible reading and then the children should try to repeat the story in their own words.)


Discussion:

Why didn't the two believers recognise Jesus? *(What happened was not what they were expecting. The disciples were counting on Jesus to free the nation (Israel) from its enemies. When Jesus died, they therefore 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. Show the children the pieces of a 300 piece puzzle (or 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 order.

Many prophecies which were made about Jesus – we are not told exactly which prophecies Jesus talked about with these men, but let's try to remember when the following examples of prophecies about Jesus were fulfilled. Remember, each of these Scriptures was written hundreds of years before Jesus was born to Mary.

Choose eight volunteers who are comfortable and confident reading aloud. Hand the first verse strip to a volunteer and have him read it aloud. Then ask the group when Jesus fulfilled it. Listen for answers. Students will most likely answer in general terms, not with a Bible verse. Then explain the fulfilment if necessary. (If you feel there are too many prophesies to discuss, choose just 2 or 3)

1. *The Lord who rules over all says, "I will send my **messenger**. He will prepare my way for me. Then suddenly the Lord you are looking for will come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant will come. He is the one you long for."* - *Micah 5:2*

Say: This was fulfilled when God sent John the Baptist to tell everyone that Jesus was coming. *(Luke 1:17, 76-79)*

2. *The Lord says,"**Bethlehem**, you might not be an important town in the nation of Judah. But out of you will come a ruler over Israel for Me. His family line goes back to the early years of your nation. It goes all the way back to days of long ago."* - *Micah 5:2*

Say: This was fulfilled when Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem to be counted for the census, and Jesus was born there. *(Luke 2:4-7)*

3. *City of Zion, be full of joy! People of Jerusalem, shout! See, your king comes to you. He always does what is right. He has the power to save. He is gentle and riding on a **donkey**. He is sitting on a donkey's colt. - Zechariah 9:9*

Say: This was fulfilled when Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey, as the people shouted, "Hosanna!" *(John 12:13-14)*

4. *If an enemy were making fun of me, I could stand it. If he were looking down on me, I could hide from him. But it's you, someone like myself. It's my companion, my close **friend**. - Psalm 55:12-13*

Say: This was fulfilled when Jesus' friend and disciple, Judas, betrayed Him *(Mark 14:10).*

5. *What a good price they had set for me! So I threw the **30 silver coins** to the potter in the **Lord's temple**. - Zechariah 11:13b*

Say: This was fulfilled when the chief priests paid Judas 30 silver coins to betray Jesus. Later, Judas threw the coins into the temple. *(Matthew 26:14-15, 27:5)*

6. *He was beaten down and made to suffer. But he didn't open his mouth. He was led away like a sheep to be killed. Lambs are **silent** while their wool is being cut off. In the same way, he didn't open his mouth. - Isaiah 53:7*

Say: This was fulfilled when Jesus allowed the guards to whip Him and beat Him. He did not say a word to defend Himself when He was on trial before Pilate. *(Matthew 27:27-31, 27:14)*

7. *A group of sinful people has closed in on me. They are all around me like a pack of dogs. They have **pierced my hands and my feet**. - Psalm 22:16*

Say: This was fulfilled when Jesus was nailed to the cross.*(John 20:25)*

8. *But the servant was pierced because we had sinned. He was crushed because we had done what was evil. He was **punished to make us whole** again. His wounds have healed us. - Isaiah 53:5*

Say: This was fulfilled when Jesus willingly took ours sins to the cross *(1 Peter 2:24)*. When we believe in Him, we are made new. His punishment saves us and gives us new life.

We could go on and on and on reading Old Testament prophecies about Jesus. There are over 300 prophecies about the Messiah, and Jesus fulfils every one of them. No one else could fulfil all the promises God had made about the Saviour of the world.

What is your favourite Sports Team or Hero? Do you think they could win 300 matches out of 300? And yet, Jesus fulfilled all 300 prophecies made about Him. What seems impossible to us is not impossible to Jesus.



Application Question:

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. The words to the following song may help you to find Jesus in the world around you.

Jesus My Lord

(The music chords appear above the words)

Refrain:
C E7 F Ab7
Have you seen Jesus my Lord?
C G7 C F C
He's here in plain view.
Dm C E7 F Ab
Take a look, open your eyes,
C G7 C FC
He'll show it to you.

Am Em
1. Have you ever looked at the sunset
F G7 C
With the sky mellowing red,
Am Em
And the clouds suspended like feathers
F Fm6 Ab
Then I say... (pause)
C G7 C
You've seen Jesus my Lord.

2. Have you ever stood at the ocean
With the white foam at your feet,
Felt the endless thundering motion?
Then I say...(pause)
You've seen Jesus my Lord. (refrain)

3. Have you ever looked at the cross,
With a man hanging in pain
And the look of love in his eyes?
Then I say...(pause)
You've seen Jesus my Lord. (refrain)

4. Have you ever stood in the family
With the Lord there in your midst
Seen the face of Christ on each other?
Then I say... (pause)
You've seen Jesus My Lord. (refrain)

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 Him with all your heart, He will reveal Himself to you.


Prayer: The words to the song below can be used as an introduction. If you do not know the song, simply say the words.

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 from the beginning of time, you gave us clues to your ultimate plan. We thank you that through the fulfilment of these prophecies our faith is deepened in you. We thank you that you appeared to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus and to Doubting 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 go out into the world and tell others of our experiences of you, so that the faith of others may also be strengthened by what we say and our witness. Amen


Craft: The children can make their own puzzles with a picture and a verse, preferably based on today's lesson. They should draw their picture on a piece of cardboard. Once complete, the picture can then be cut up into a number of pieces and given to someone else in the class to complete.

Extra Activity: Have a number of puzzles out for the children to complete. Who can complete a puzzle the fastest? – Don't give them the picture.

References:
www.missionbible.org.com
www.sermons4kids.com

The Evangelical Covenant Church

Foot prints

(GAME for eight to ten year olds)

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

Materials: "feet", tape, questions

Instructions:

1. Make enough "feet" using the pattern found at the end of the lesson.
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.

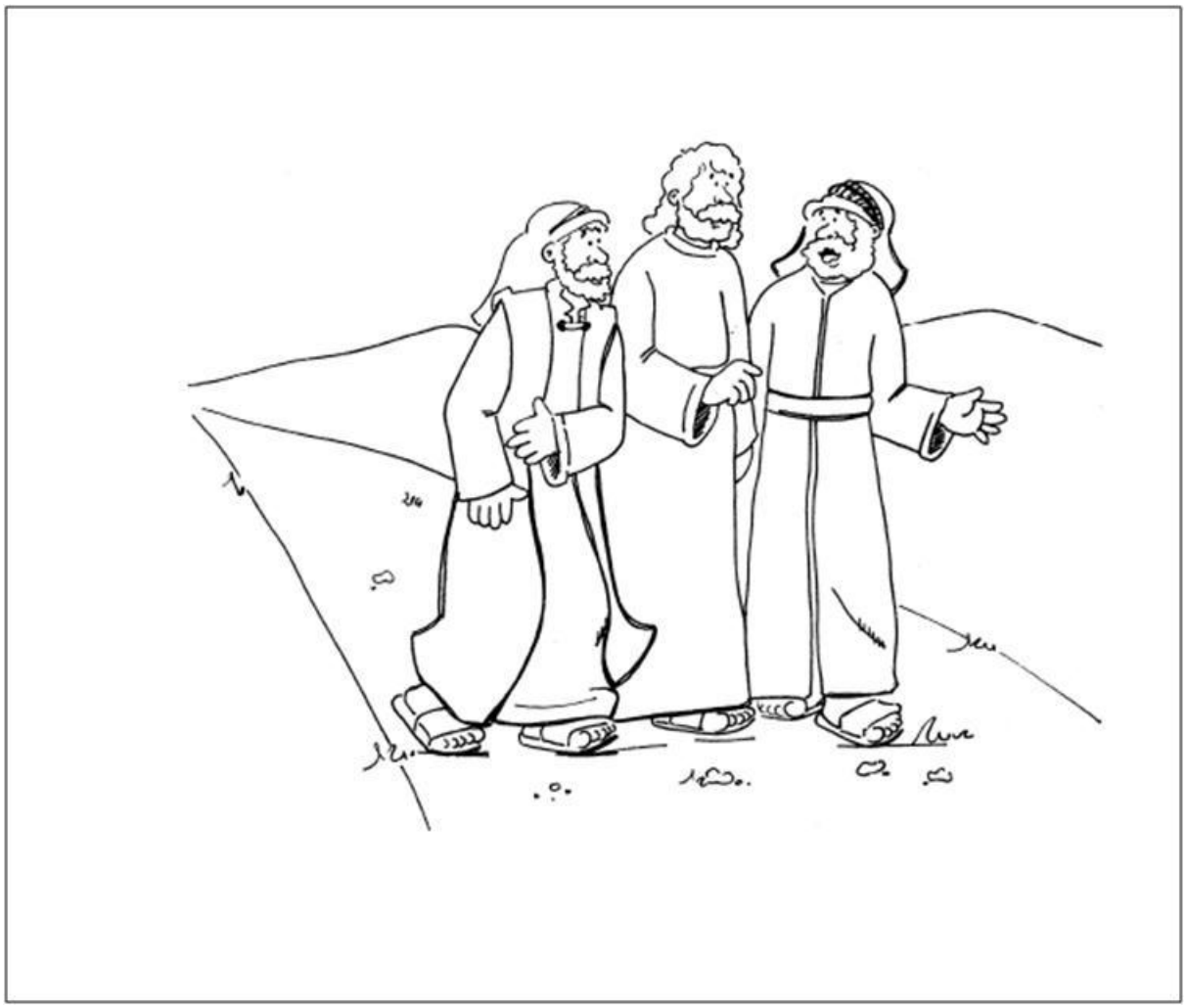
1. Jesus was in the tomb 3 days (true)
2. Jesus rose from the dead on a Friday (false, Sunday)
3. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a cart (false, donkey)
4. Jesus and his disciples celebrated the last supper together (true)
5. Jesus had 14 disciples (false, 12)
6. Peter denied his friendship with Jesus 3 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

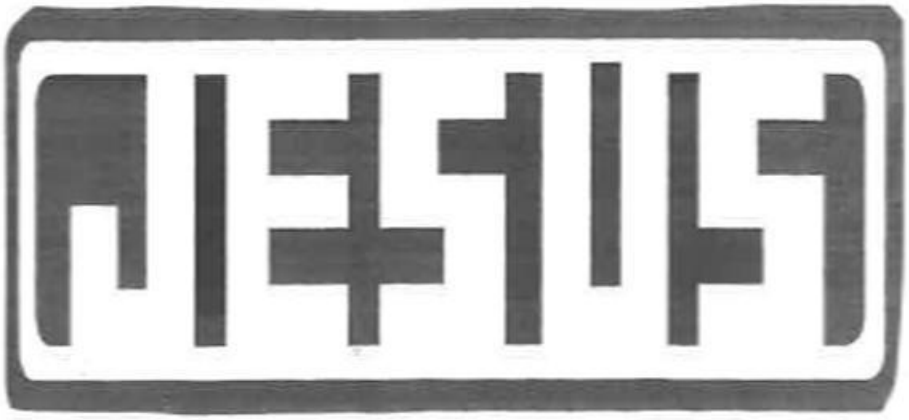
These are all open ended questions. However, the group answers – they may progress forward.

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?

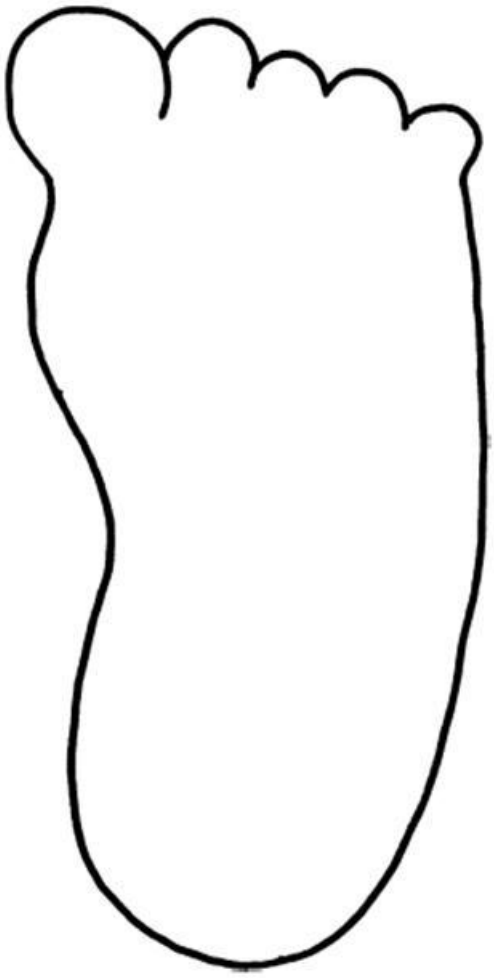
You can use this picture to make your puzzles



Here is another fun illusion. What can you see? (The word Jesus is written if you look carefully)



Footprint for game





Jesus the Good Shepherd *

Fourth Sunday of Easter
11 May

Readings: *John 10:1-10*
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 no doubt a foreign concept to our modern day children, the closest idea of shepherding would be that of a herd's boy. For this reason the role of a shepherd needs to be explained to the children so that they may better understand that Jesus is our Good Shepherd.

The role of shepherd, as described in the Bible, brought with it much hardship and even danger. The shepherd was exposed to extremes of heat and cold and his food frequently consisted of whatever Mother Nature supplied, such as fruit from the sycamore trees, figs, husks from the carob tree, honey and even locusts. He not only had to fight off the attacks of wild animals such as lions, wolves, panthers and bears, but also had to defend himself from the attack of robbers. To meet these various foes the shepherd's equipment consisted of the following articles: a mantle, made probably of sheep skin with the fleece on; a pouch, containing a small amount of food; a sling, which was the favourite weapon and lastly a staff, which served the double purpose of a weapon and a crook for the management of the flock.

The routine of the shepherd's duties included the following: 1) Every morning he would lead the flock from the fold, he did this by going before them and calling to them. 2) Arriving at the field he watched the flock, and should any sheep go astray, he had to search for it until he found it. He knew every sheep by name – he took an interest in each of them. 3) He supplied the sheep with water, either at a stream or at troughs attached to wells. 4) In the evening he would bring them back to the fold, and checked to see that none were missing, counting them as they entered the door of the enclosure. 5) Finally 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 wondering off into the night.

Being a shepherd required great watchfulness, particularly at night. It also required tenderness toward the young sheep, particularly in driving them to and from the field.

The lesson today focuses on the beautiful images we all have of Jesus, our good shepherd. Jesus is our loving, caring protector. He wishes us to live life to the full. Mere existence is not enough for us - we must experience being alive.

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 the Lord, learn to hear His voice, listen to Him and do what He asks of us.

It follows then that every Christian is called to imitate the Good Shepherd. We are to find an outlet for the love that we have received. We are called be loving and caring persons, always remembering that as we follow the 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 his lambs and sheep.



Attention Grabber:

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, following an example that you have made beforehand.

Play a CD that has a recording of Psalm 23 or any other music that tells of God's love and care.

For this lesson, if you have, bring a sling, a shepherd's staff, and other equipment of a shepherd. Ask the children if they know who would use such items? Talk about what it means to be a shepherd.



Bible Story: Story of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7) – the lectionary reading for today is too difficult for the little ones to understand.



Discussion:

- Quiet the children down by placing a blanket on the floor for story time.
- 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)*
- Who is our shepherd? *(Jesus is our shepherd; we are His sheep)*
- God looks after us and protects us; He knows each of us; We can trust Him
- Sometimes sheep are fearful and timid and easily run off in fear. Other times sheep just wonder 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.



Sing:

The Lord is my shepherd
The Lord is my shepherd, I'll trust in Him always
He leads me by still waters, I'll trust in Him always
Always, always, I'll trust in Him always
Always, always, I'll trust in Him always

**Prayer:** Dear Lord Jesus. We thank you that you care for us and look after us and love us so much. Please help us to care and love others as much as you love us. Amen.

**Craft:**

- Decorate paper sheep (template provided) with cotton wool, on which the children write their names. Stick these on a picture that you have prepared beforehand that depicts green grassy hills, clean running water etc. Add the words of the memory verse to this scene.
- Each child is given their own copy of the picture on page 45. They can then colour and add cotton wool.
- Use the Sheep mask template to make masks for the children.

**Activities:**

(There are a too many activities listed below, so choose which you think are 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 His sheep.
- **Memory game:** Put a number of items under a cloth. Children must memorize them. The teacher then removes one item without the children seeing and they must then try to remember which item is missing.
- **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.
- **Find your animal:** Children must find their animal by making animal noises. Be sure to include a sheep. Each child must make the noise of his / her animal in order to find their partner
- **Animal noises:** When teacher says "horse", everyone "neighs; "pig" everyone "oinks"; "cat" everyone "meows" etc. When teacher says "sheep" everyone is silent!
- Create a sheepfold out of chairs. Some of the children can be sheep; others can be the thieves or wild beasts and one can be the shepherd. If others want to be the shepherd encourage this.

**Snack:** The children can use marshmallows and chocolate pretzel sticks to try make sheep.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To understand what it means to have Jesus as our Shepherd
- To understand 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 playground. 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 tagged (touched). If a player is behind his own team's line, he is safe and cannot be tagged by the other team. If a player is tagged, he has to stay with the other team until he is rescued by being tagged 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: John 10:1-10



Discussion:

- Listen to the Bible reading passage for today and look at the images provided at the end of this lesson. Describe what words come to mind from these images of a shepherd. Perhaps use Psalm 23 instead if John 10:1-10 seems a bit complicated for your class. *(A shepherd offers protection; looks after the weak and sick; looks for the lost; is caring and gentle; doesn't abandon his sheep)*
- Use the information found at the beginning of this lesson to further add to the discussion. Discuss what each step in a shepherd's daily routine means to us e.g. "he supplies the sheep with water" implies that our shepherd (i.e. Jesus) provides for all our needs.
- Jesus also said He is the gateway of the sheep. What is the function of a gate*? (To let someone in and to prevent another from entering. Jesus therefore offers access to safety and security. He is our protector. He is also the gate, the way of access to God. In another passage Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to me but through the Father." (John 14:6)*
- So Jesus is our protector. With Him caring for us we can have fullness of life. What does fullness of life mean? *(Because God is watching over us, we can live without fear. God doesn't want us to simply exist. He takes care of our needs and fears, so that we can seize the day and live life to the fullest. We can live in a higher plane because of God's overflowing forgiveness, love and guidance.)*

- 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 gentle Lays down his life for his sheep Knows each sheep by name

- Jesus can only care for us if we learn to hear His voice, listen, follow Him and do what He asks of us.



Craft:

- Each group makes a poster with something on it from what they have learnt today. Outlines of a shepherd and sheep with cotton wool can be provided to add to the picture.
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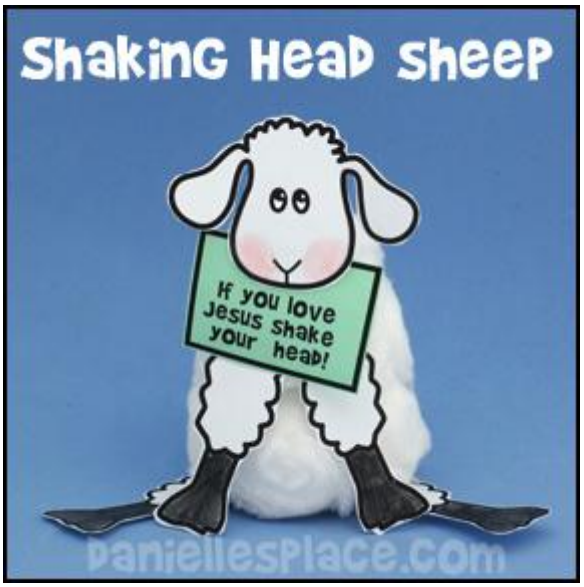

What you will need: Cotton balls, card stock, black markers, scissors, staples, glue
How to make:
1. Print out the pattern on pg 46 and paste on to cardboard
2. Cut out the pattern pieces.
3. Glue or staple the body pattern together to form a cone shape.
4. Cut large cotton balls into smaller shapes 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 follow the one who will lead us in the right places. Amen



Songs:

- The Lord is my shepherd (see the younger children's lesson for words)
- I just want to be a sheep

Extra activities:

- **"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.

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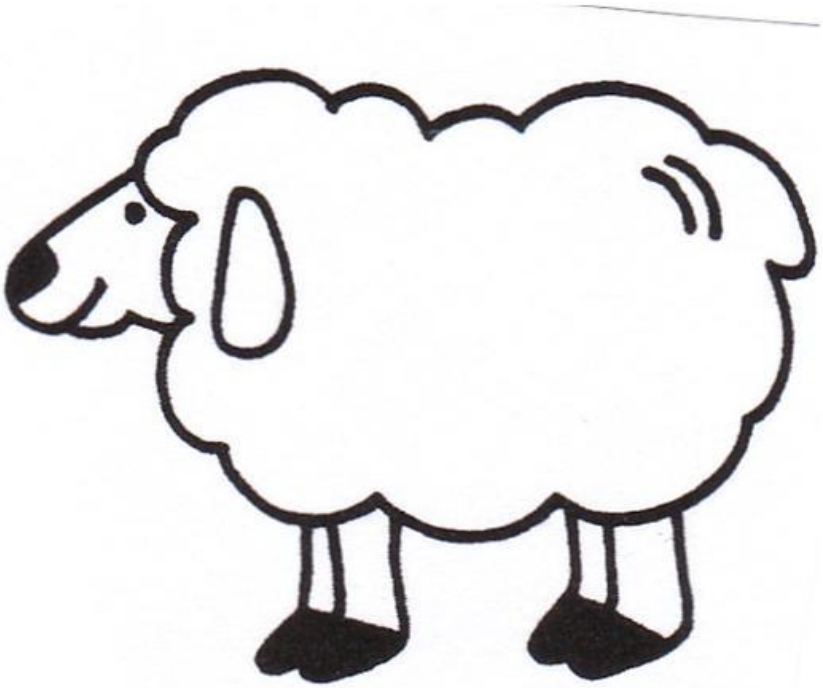
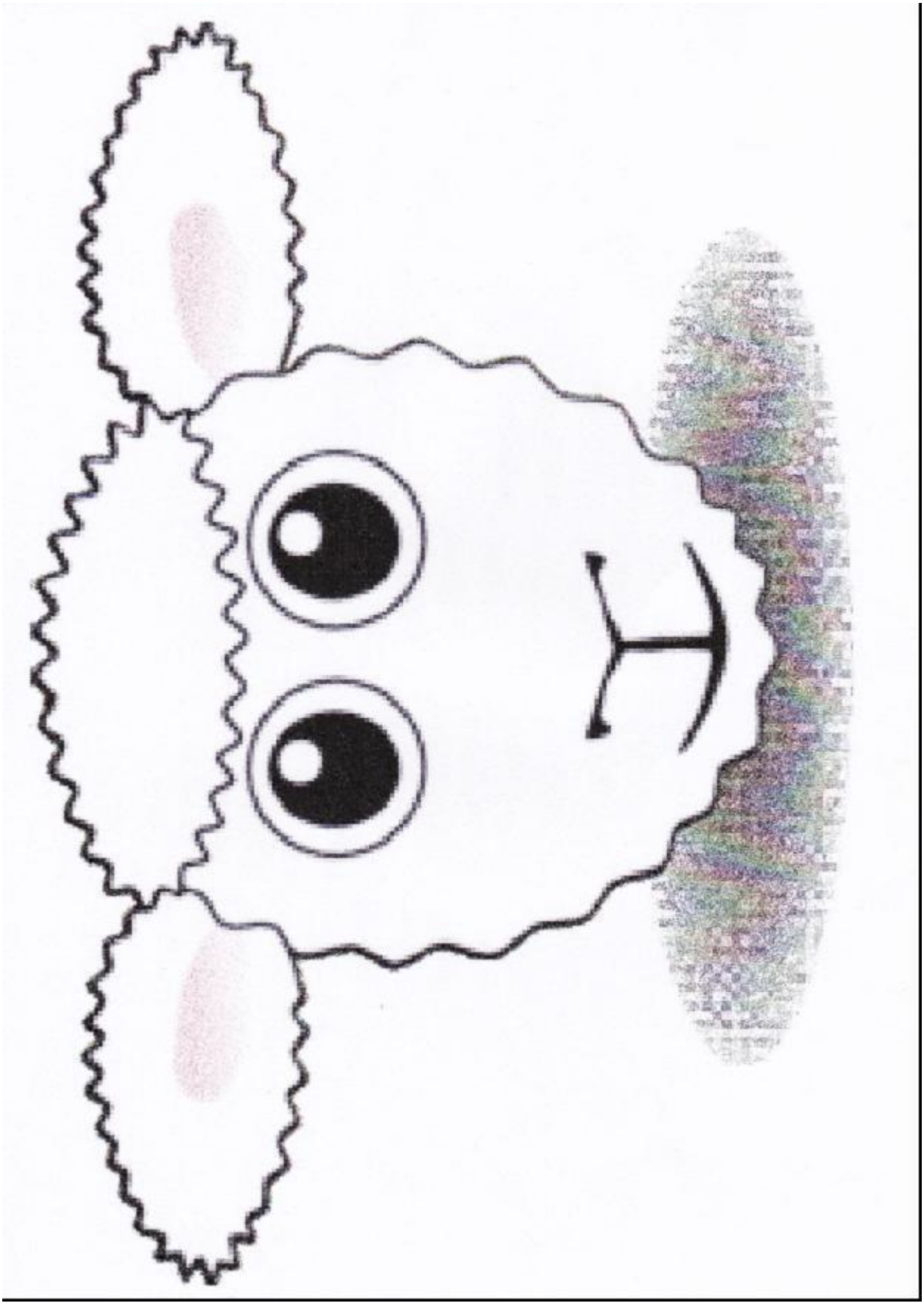
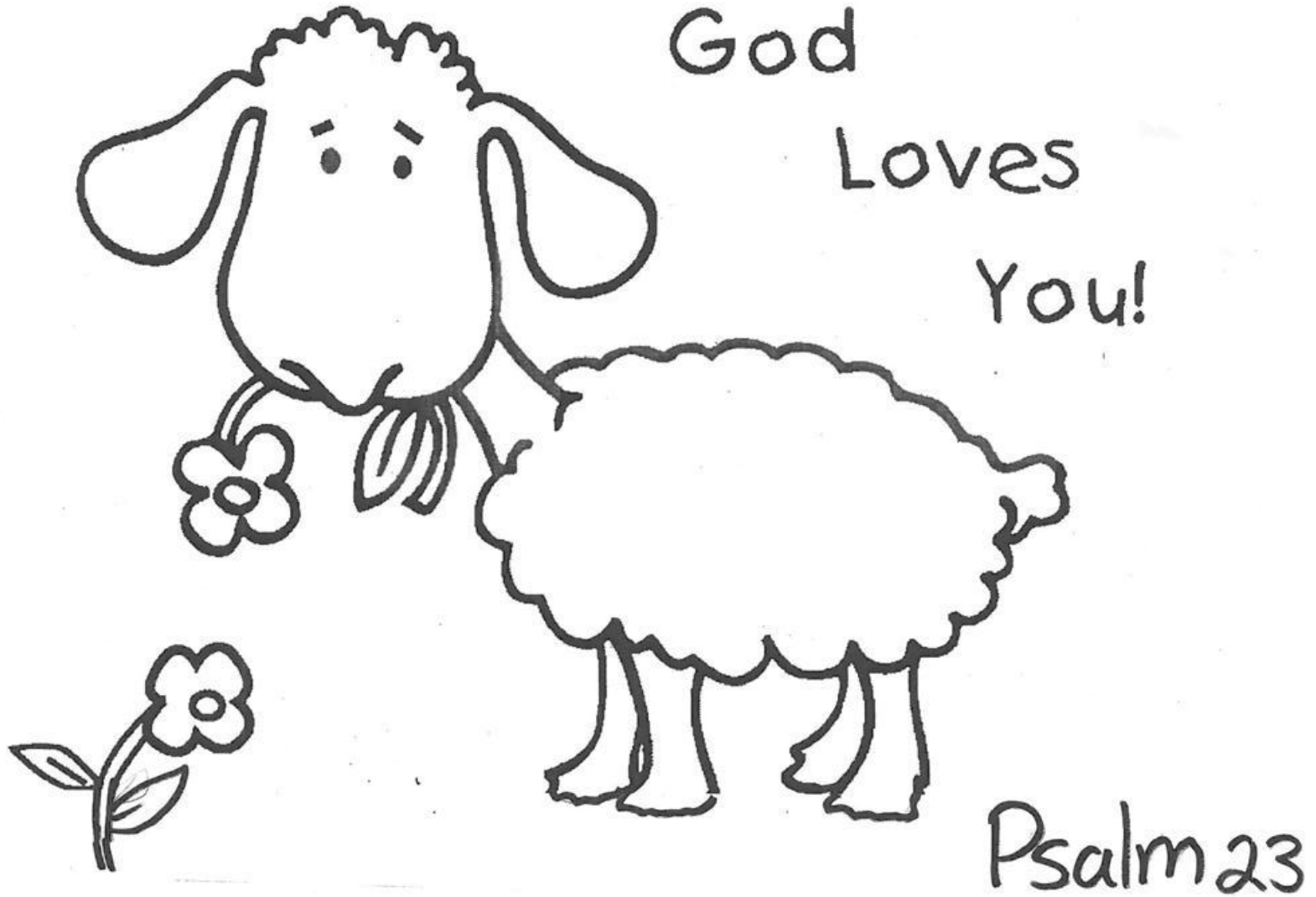
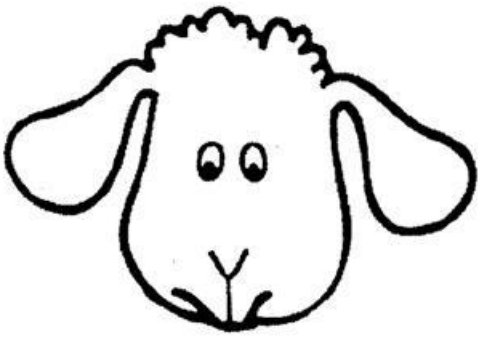


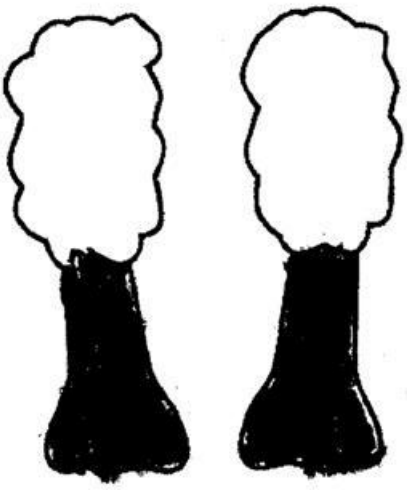






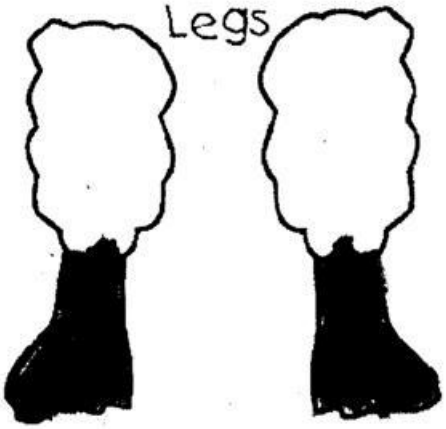

God
Loves
You!
Psalm 23



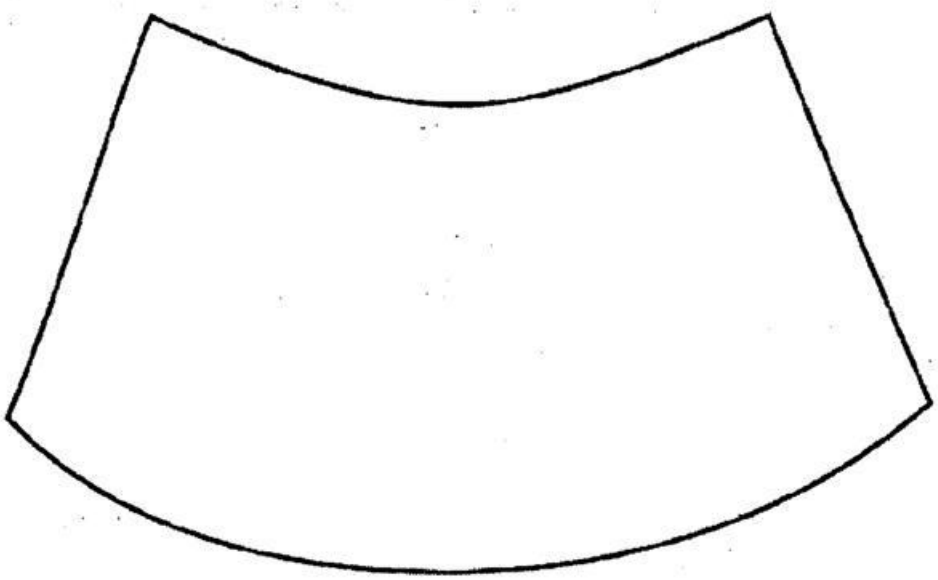


Back legs

Front Legs



Jesus looks after all His sheep

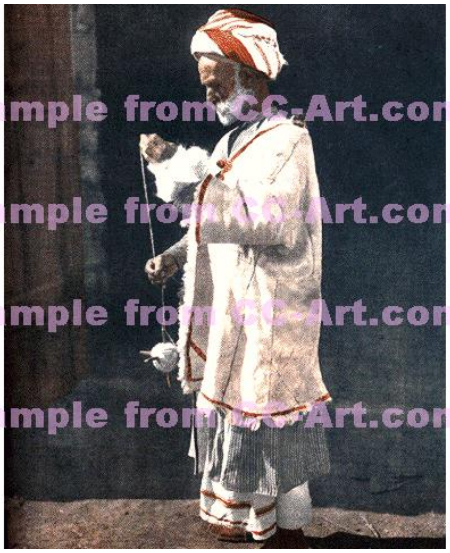




This shepherd has rescued one of his sheep form the ravine. He wears a long white garment girdled with leather. The cloak required for warmth at night is rolled up and carried on his back. In his right hand is his sling, dangling below the hind feet of the sheep. He has a goatskin water-bottle under his arm.



This shepherd is carrying a stray sheep on his shoulders.



Shepherds made themselves coats of sheepskin, but the bulk of clothing worn by shepherds was woven wool



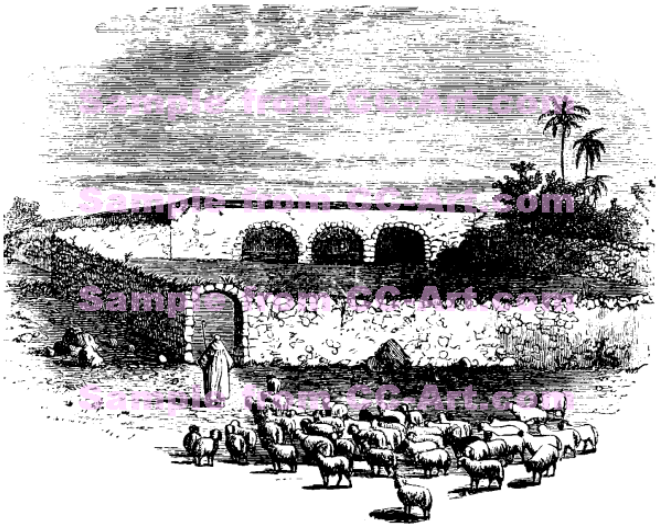
Traditional shepherds lead their sheep daily to rest at noon in a quiet pasture and to a safe drinking place in the evening. The sheep know their shepherd's voice and follow him when he calls them by name



In the sheepfold the shepherd anoints the heads of the sheep with oil to preserve them from sunstroke and to heal any bramble scratches



A sheepfold corral protected by thorn bushes with a cavern behind



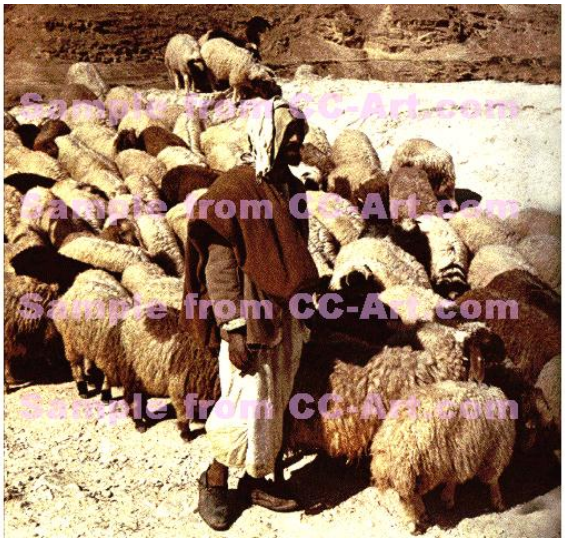
A shepherd leading the sheep into the sheepfold



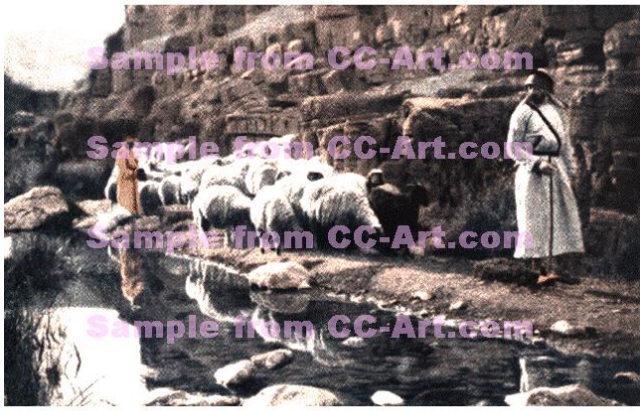
Flocks pass under the hands of the shepherd who counts them. If one is missing as they enter the sheepfold he will leave the others that are safe and will search for the lost sheep.



In the dusk, when the shepherd can no longer be easily seen by his sheep, he taps the rocks with his staff to assure them he is near. He calls them by name and his staff guides them and protects them from wild beasts.



A shepherd guarding his sheep in the wilderness



The main duties of a shepherd are to lead his flocks to green pastures and to find them a safe drinking place by fresh water.



A shepherd with the help of his crock (staff) has gathered this lamb from a cleft in the rocks and comforted it as he carried it to its mother in the fold.



In addition to his staff a useful weapon of the shepherd boy is a sling.



When the going gets tough! (The stoning of Stephen) *

Fifth Sunday of Easter
18 May

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:

The early Christians posed a threat to the power of the Pharisees and leaders of the temple. One such man was Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit. He did great wonders and miracles among the people.

The Christians told of a new way of doing things, which 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 plan for his 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 tragic story which we would perhaps like to avoid. However, there are many lessons we can gain from this story. Firstly, we learn it is not always easy to be a Christian but it is important to stand firm in our beliefs.

Secondly, Stephen kept his eyes focussed 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.

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

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 sacred 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:

- 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 His people.
- Do you think God is always with you and looks after you, even when you are in a scary situation or afraid?
- Briefly look at the Bible story of Stephen. (Acts 6:8 -7:60 – 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
- 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? *(bright!)*
- What do you think angels look like? *(They have wings; they are bright; they wear white)*
- 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.)*
- Do you think God wants us to be like angels too? *(Yes!)*
- How can we be like an angel? *(By living as Jesus wants us to live; doing what is right and good; reading our Bible and praying to learn more about how we should behave)*
- What have we learnt today?
    - God is always with us, so we never need be afraid. He is always there to look after us
    - We need to try to be like angels and shine for Jesus!

**Songs:**

Be Bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you
Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you
Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you
I am not afraid, I am not dismayed
I'm walking in faith and victory
For the Lord, my God is with me

Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
To shine for Him each day
In every way try to please Him
At school, at work and play
A sunbeam, a sunbeam
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
A sunbeam, a sunbeam
I'll be a sunbeam today

**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 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!
- Make an angel. Stephen's face shone like an angel. God wants us to shine for Him too. Decorate an angel template with glitter or perhaps make halos for the children to wear.
- Make a sun or sunbeam using any material e.g. paint, crayons – teachers, use your imagination! The children could possibly attach their artwork to a magnet to hang on their fridge. Attach the song, "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam" to this activity.

**Physical activity:**

- Play hopscotch with stones – just for fun!
- 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.

- The little girls may like to dress up as angels.

**Snack:**

- Make an angel using an ice-cream cone, a marshmallow, 2 quarters of a marie biscuit and icing.
- Make rock cakes



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To learn about the story of Stephen and other stories where God was with His people in difficult times
- To know 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 magazine subscriptions to strangers door-to-door – or over the phone.
5. Walk through a cemetery 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.

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 to summarise the story that has just been read and discuss 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 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)*
- Was God with:
    - Peter while he was in prison? *(Yes, an angel was sent to set him free)*
    - Daniel while he was in the lion's den and in the fiery furnace*? (Yes, God sent an angel to shut the lion's mouth and an extra body, an angel, was seen in the fiery furnace. Daniel (and his friends) remained unharmed.)*

- From these and many other stories we learn that God is always with His people and gives them 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? *(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.



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? *(Read the Bible, pray, go to church, spend time with other Christians)*
- You and I might not die telling other people about Jesus, but He does ask us to stand up for Him, not to be ashamed that we believe in Him. 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)*



Songs:

- Stand up, stand up for Jesus
- Turn your eyes upon Jesus
- Do not be afraid, for I am with you.
- Be bold, be strong (See the younger children's lesson for words)

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of the earth will
grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace

Do not be afraid

Do not be afraid,
For I am with you
I have called you by your name
You are mine

Stand up, stand up for Jesus

Stand up! Stand up for Jesus!
Ye soldiers of the Cross
Lift high his royal banner
It must not suffer loss.
From victory unto victory
His army He shall lead
Til every foe is vanquished
And Christ is Lord indeed.



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 Father in Heaven. 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 star, 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 star. 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).

**Physical activity:**

- Play hopscotch with stones – just for fun!

- 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.

References:

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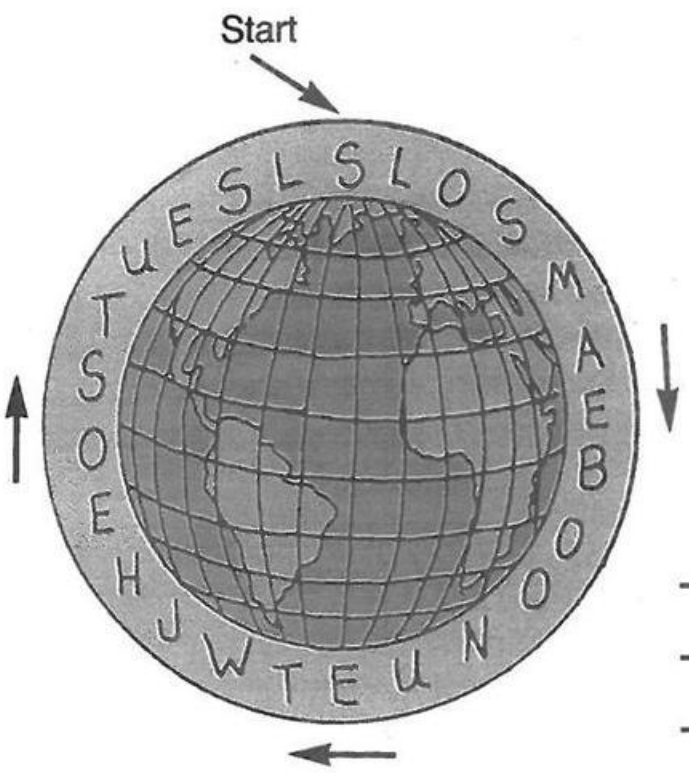
A Witness Puzzle

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 _ _ _ _ _ _

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Answer: SOMEONE WHO TELLS ABOUT JESUS

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A walk Through the Bible

Sixth Sunday of Easter
25 May

Theme: *Learning more about the Word of God*

Information for the teacher:

Our faith comes from two sources – the teaching we receive in Church and the Bible. The Bible is a collection of texts considered sacred to Christianity and it is therefore very important that we know the Bible so that we are able to tell others about Jesus.

This lesson will help the children to gain an overall picture of the Bible, hopefully 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. Also, by asking questions, rather than just telling your class the facts, will 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!

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson objective: To obtain a basic knowledge to the structure 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 a Bible is? Do you have your own Bibles?

Why do we have the Bible? *(God gave us a Bible because He loves us and wants us to know more about Him. In the Bible, God tells us about who He is and His 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. The first story in the Old Testament tells us about how God created the world.

The New Testament is found towards the end of the Bible and it tells us stories about Jesus, his disciples (his 12 special friends) and the early church. It is not as big as the Old 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.)

It is important to know the stories in the Bible so that you can tell others about Jesus. How can you get to know your Bible better? *(By reading it and coming to Sunday school.)*



Sing:

Read your Bible
Read your Bible, pray everyday,
pray everyday, pray everyday

Read your Bible, pray everyday,
and you'll grow, grow, grow

Jesus loves me

Jesus loves me this I know
For the Bible tells me so
Little ones to Him belong
They are weak but He is strong

Yes, Jesus loves me (X3)
The Bible tells me so.

The B-I-B-L-E
The B-I-B-L-E
Yes, that's the book for me
I stand alone on the Word of God
The B-I-B-L-E

Does Jesus love us? *(Yes!)*
How do we know this? *(The Bible tells us so!)*

Where did the Bible come from? The Bible was written by many different people. Some people believe that Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament. David, the shepherd boy and later a king, also wrote parts of the Old Testament.

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
Four corners to my bed
Four angels round me spread
One at my head
One at my feet
And two to guard me while I sleep



Craft: Each child can make a bookmark for the Bible with the poem as seen above. The pictures at the bottom of this page can be added to the bookmark which the children can colour in.



Snack: Discuss what people would have eaten in those days. Have samples of food, such as dates, honey, milk, water for the children to taste. Discuss if they would have had chocolate and coke etc.



Prayer: Thank God that there are people who wrote down the stories of the Bible, so that we can learn more about God and the world around us.

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, make up cards with all the names of the books of the Bible on separate cards. Depending on how well you think your class knows the books of the Bible, divide the class into 2 groups, or more, or you may even challenge your class to attempt this task individually. The challenge is to put all the books of the Bible into the correct order.

If you think your class may struggle with this challenge, you can simplify it by asking them to group the books into the Old and New Testament or group into books of prophecy, poetry etc. For your information, the Bible Book Case at the end of this lesson shows how the books are grouped in the bible.



Discussion:

(If possible, give each child a copy of the Bible Bookcase, found at the end of this lesson before you start the discussion.)

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

Why do we have the Bible? *(God gave us a Bible because He loves us and wants us to know more about Him. In the Bible, God tells us about who He is and His plan for the world.)*

It is important that you know your way around the Bible and that you know your Bible so that you are able to tell others about God and Jesus and know how God wants you to live.

What does the word Bible mean? (*It means "Book". The Bible is actually a collection or library of books. There are two main Books in the Bible – 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 in the New Testament? (27 – can be remembered by 3 x 9 = 27; 3 and 9 making up the number of books in the Old Testament)
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. The first story in the Old Testament tells us about how God created the world.

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 books are traditionally thought to have been written by Moses. These five books also make up the Torah, which is sacred to the Jews. These first five books cover the creation of the world through to the nation of Israel. These books cover God's law for His people.
Who knows which book The Ten Commandments are found in? *(Exodus)*
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, Delilah, Ester)*

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).*
The books of poetry are full of expression. David poured out his soul to God, no matter whether he was happy or sad. David knew he could talk to God about anything, and so can you!
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. There were major and minor prophets, but that had nothing to do with how important they were. It had to do with how long their writings were. 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.

One of our most important prayers comes from one of the Gospels. Which prayer is this and which Gospel? *(The Lord's Prayer comes from the book of Matthew.)*

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!

The next book in the New Testament is the book of Acts, which tells the history of the early church. This book 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. The book of Acts was also written by Luke.

The rest of the New Testament, except the last book, consists of the epistles, or letters. Which of the apostles wrote 13 of the letters? *(Paul)*
How many letters are there? *(21)*
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 – although not all scholars are certain that this was the same John who wrote one of the books in the gospel)*
It is a book of prophecy and uses images to tell how the whole story ends! And here is how it ends: God wins (!) and everyone who believes in Jesus will live with Him forever in a new heaven and new earth.

Possible Activities:

- Each child can decorate their own copy of the Bible Bookcase, which can possibly 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 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!)**I** **J**ust **L**et **E**ddy **D**rink **H**is **J**uice **A**nd **O**verheard **J**ohn **M**ention **N**ow **H**ow **Z**ebras **H**ave **Z**any **M**anners.
  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.

- 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.

Scripture Cake Recipe

¾ cup Genesis 18:8
1 ½ cup Jeremiah 6:20
5 Isaiah 10:14 (separated)
3 cups sifted Leviticus 24:5
½ teaspoon 2 Kings 2:20
3 teaspoons Amos 4:5
1 teaspoon Exodus 30:23
¼ teaspoon each 2 Chronicles 9:9
½ cup Judges 4:19
1 T Proverbs 24:13
¾ chopped Genesis 43:11
¾ cup finely chopped Jeremiah 24:5
¾ cup 2 Samuel 16:1
Whole Genesis 43:11

Method:

1. Cream Genesis 18 with Jeremiah 6 and Proverbs 24:13. Beat in yolks of Isaiah 10, one at a time. Sift together Leviticus 24; 2 Kings 2; Amos 4; Exodus 30 and 2 Chronicles 9
2. Blend into creamed mixture alternately with Judges 4. Beat whites of Isaiah 10 until stiff; fold in slowly. Fold in chopped Genesis 43; Jeremiah 24 and 2 Samuel 16. Turn into 10 inch loaf pan that has been greased and dusted with Leviticus 24.
3. Bake at 180 ^{0}C for about an hour, until it is golden brown.

- 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 names another book and repeats the first one e.g. "Genesis and Ephesians 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
6. Revelations 4:8
7. Joel 2:15
8. 2 Corinthians 13:14
9. Acts 12:1
10. Ruth 1:16
15. Job 1:1
16. Habakkuk 3:19
17. Titus 2:11
18. Song of Solomon 2:1
19. Galatians 3:27
20. Numbers 15:40



Song:

God gave us a special task
(The tune is "Bingo)

God gave us a special book
The Bible is its name oh!
B-I-B-L-E; B-I-B-L-E; B-I-B-L-E
The Bible is its name oh!

(Repeat the song but drop a letter each time and replace with a "Clap"(*) instead)

God gave us a special task
The Bible is its name oh!
*-I-B-L-E; *-I-B-L-E; *-I-B-L-E
The Bible is its name oh!

(Repeat again, this time dropping the B and I from Bible, and replace both these letters with a *. Continue repeating this song until all the letters have been replaced with claps)



Prayer:

Thank God that there are people who wrote down the stories of the Bible, so that we can learn more about God and the world around us.

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

References:

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- 100 Activities for Grades 1 to 8, E. Rossini, 1996, San Francisco: Ignatius Press
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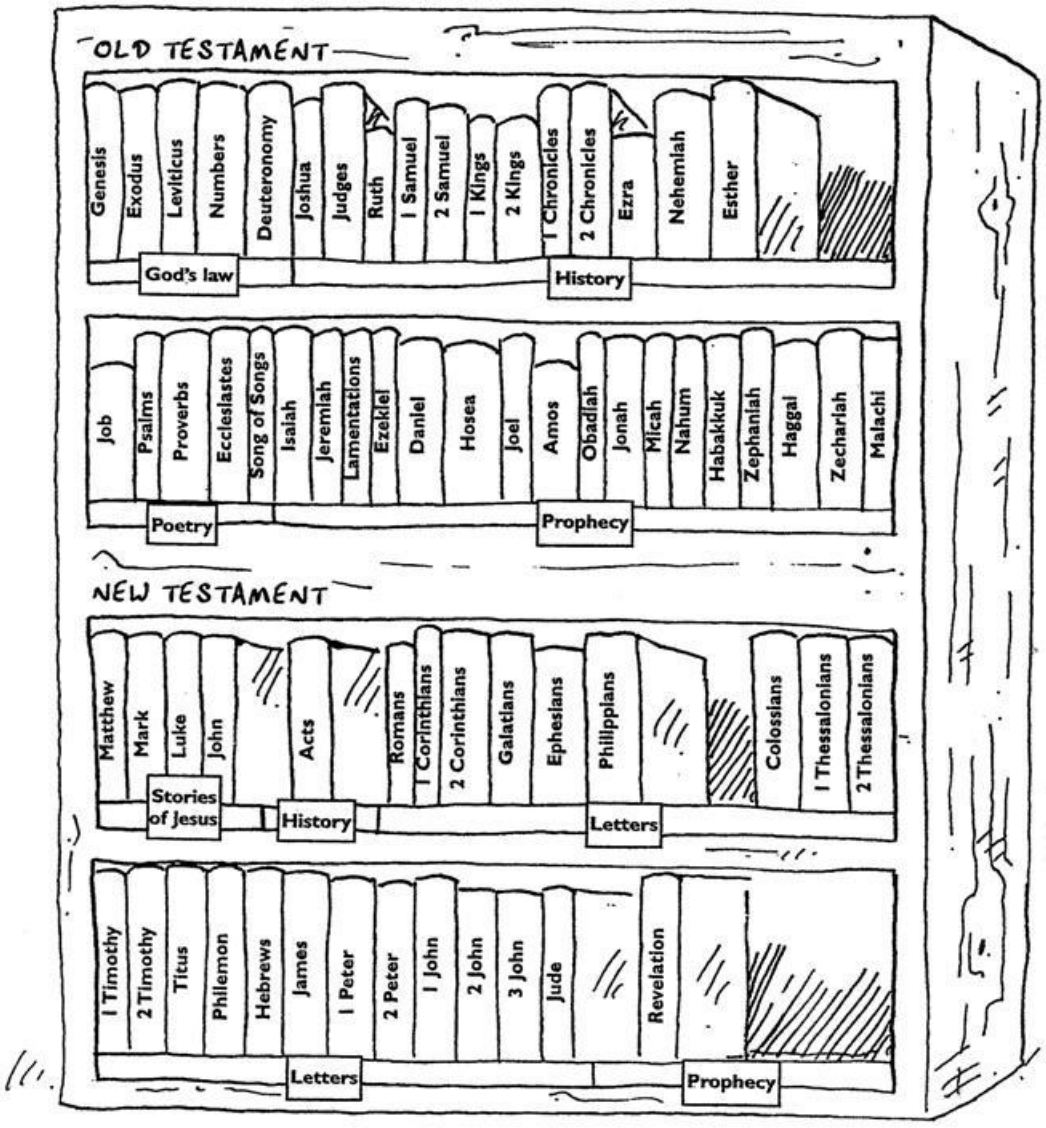
Answers to scriptures cake recipe:

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

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).





Jesus goes back to God (Ascension)*

Seventh Sunday of Easter
1 June

Readings: *Acts 1: 1-11*
Theme: *Jesus goes back to God*
Memory verse: *"The same Jesus, who has been taken from you into Heaven, will come back in the same way" (Acts 1:11)*



Information for the teacher:

The Ascension is part of the resurrection and the giving of the Holy Spirit. **All three are part of the same event** - one action - Jesus emerges from the tomb, returns to the Father and then sends the Holy Spirit. Without the Resurrection there is no Ascension and without Ascension there is no Pentecost.How the Ascension occurred is not important but Jesus is now with the Father. It marks the end of Jesus' appearances on earth and his physical ministry. (Susan Sayers, 2001)

Ascension is the bridge between the life of the earthly Christ and the life of the Church as the visible presence of Christ in the world. It takes place 40 days after the Resurrection and ten days before Pentecost. It is important to remember that God has not left us but is still with us,helping us, pointing out Christ's position of authority over, and responsibility for the world and his glorification as God as he resumes the nature of the Godhead - it is this action that enables God's Holy Spirit to be poured out on all peoples in all places.

Ascension is a call for us to be like Jesus - we are to witness to Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To teach the children that after Jesus died he went back to his Father in Heaven.



Attention Grabber:

Hide an image of Jesus or a doll and ask the children to look for it. Whenever they search in the incorrect location, say, "He's not here". Play the game until the first person finds 'Jesus'.



Bible Story:

Tell the children that after Jesus rose from the dead, he spent 40 precious days with his disciples and then he had to say good-bye. Recount to the children how Jesus was taken up/ the events of the Ascension using the below idea:



(Please see instructions on how to make it at the end of the lesson)

As you tell the story, pull the string and Jesus disappears into the paper cup (the cloud)



Discussion:

Ask the children where did Jesus go? *(Up into heaven to be with his Father)*
Then tell them that even though he went away, he still loves and cares for us even though we cannot see him. Then get them the repeat the poem below while doing the actions.

Jesus said to his friends one day,
"Very soon I must go away,
Don't be sad *(pretend like you're crying)* because
I will come back again!
Jesus told his friends:

"Tell my story everywhere."
And then as his special friends
were standing there
Jesus went up, up, up *(rise on your toes with arms pointing to the sky)*
Into the sky!



Craft: Give each of the children a paper cup threaded with string. Get them to glue a few clouds on the cups. Now they can pull the string up to see Jesus going up into heaven.



Prayer: 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*). Amen

(Susan Sayers, 2001)



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To teach the children that Jesus went back to his Father in Heaven.
- To help them understand the importance of the Ascension
- To encourage them to commit to being a witness for Christ in their schools, homes and everywhere they go



Attention Grabber:

Proof of Jesus' resurrection: get a set of pictures that represent Jesus' death and resurrection: a cross; an empty tomb; an Angel appearing to Mary and other women; two men with Jesus on the road to Emmaus; Jesus appearing to the 11 disciples. Ask the children to put the pictures in order on the floor or on a big sheet of paper and give the sequence of Jesus' death and resurrection. (Some pictures are included at the end of this lesson)



Bible Story: Read from Acts 1: 1-11 or ask two children to read.



Discussion:

Use the information at the beginning to tell the children about Jesus' resurrection. Jesus gave His apostles a very important instruction.

Ask: **What was this instruction?** Re-read Acts 1:4-5. It was important for the Apostles to obey Jesus' instructions and wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. Jesus knew what God's plans were and He was preparing them for when He returned to heaven. The apostles didn't fully understand what was about to happen. Even though they didn't understand they needed to follow the instructions Jesus gave them.

God's plan was for Jesus to return to heaven. Jesus had chosen His apostles to be messengers for Him after He left. Although Jesus was returning to heaven He was not abandoning His apostles. God never leaves or abandons His children. (www.ministry-to-children.com)

Ask: Why did Jesus say they needed to wait for the Holy Spirit? (Acts 1:8)

Ask: What message did Jesus want His apostles to tell others? Read Matthew 28:19-20.



Application Questions

What message do you think Jesus is giving to you as a child of God? Allow the children to give their views.

Follow up: How can we be witnesses for Christ on earth?



Prayer:

Dear Lord, Thank you for coming down to earth to save us. Thank you for preparing a place for us in Heaven. Help us always to be prepared for your Second Coming. Amen



Worksheet: Read the story then unscramble the words and enter them in the boxes below.

During the 40 days after Jesus' resurrection, (being raised from the dead), he appeared to his disciples from time to time. He spoke to them about the kingdom of God. Once he told them to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the gift he would send them. That gift would be the Holy Spirit. He would live in them and guide them. He would be a Comforter to them. Jesus wanted them to tell everyone on earth that he had died for them. He told them to teach and to baptize those who believed. After Jesus said this, he was taken up to heaven right in front of their eyes. A cloud hid him from their sight and two angels, who looked like men dressed in white, came and stood beside them. The angels said, "Why are you looking up in the sky? This same Jesus who has been taken up into heaven will come back some day in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." We also believe that he will come again.

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ssJue

Ysk



Song:

Ascension song
(Tune: Love lifted me)

***Chorus*:**
Up in the sky
To God on high.
"Je-sus will come a-gain"
Said an-gels nigh!

***Verse*:**
Je-sus' work on earth was done;
He had ful-filled God's plan.
Cru-ci-fied, then he a-rose
All for the sake of man.

He taught them for for-ty days
Things that they all should know,
Then as-cend-ed back to hea-ven.
He did go.

Lord, I lift your name on high
(Make up actions for this song)

Lord I lift your name on high
Lord, I love to sing your praises
I'm so glad you're in my life
I'm so glad you came to save us

Chorus:
You came from Heaven to Earth to show the way
From the earth to the cross my debt to pay
From the cross to the grave
From the grave to the sky
Lord, I lift your name on high



Physical Activity: 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. Remind the children that relay races are won or lost on the transfer of the baton, once firmly gripped, however the baton is rarely dropped.

Link this idea to the Ascension of Jesus, the time when Jesus hands over the baton of the Good news to His disciples, with the instruction to live and preach the gospel, to be the presence of Jesus in the world.

HOW TO MAKE PAPER CUP CRAFT

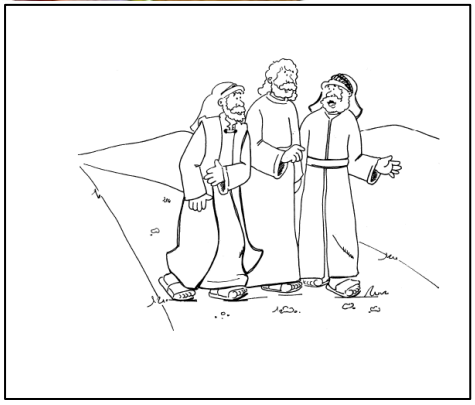
Materials needed:
White card cut into cloud shapes; 1 big cloud shape; blue paper cup or white cup covered in blue paper; string; Jesus image on card.

Instructions:
Cut out cloud shapes to stick on a paper cup. Then make a large cloud and punch a hole in the cloud, paper cup and the card with Jesus image. Attach a thread to the image; pass the thread through the paper cup and attach to the large cloud.

JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION IN PICTURES











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The Church is Born (Pentecost)*

Pentecost
8 June

Readings: Acts 2: 1-8,11-13, 14-24, 36-41
Themes: *The Church is born; the Holy Spirit comes down*
Memory verses:

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

Lesson Objectives:

- To celebrate the birth of the church
- To tell the children that the Holy Spirit is our helper
- To tell the children how their own church started and its age

Information for the teacher:

Pentecost is the festival celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus, 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, it was also a festival of thanksgiving for harvested crops. Jews of many nations had gathered in Jerusalem for this festival. It was during this time that Peter addressed the crowds and so Peter's speech was given to an international audience and it resulted in the first converts to Christianity. (NIV Life Application Bible) The Church was now the body of Christ that included **all** people of **all** cultures and **all** nations.

Pentecost Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to have a change from the usual Sunday school programme and do something different. Instead of breaking into separate groups, the children can have a big birthday party with orange and yellow balloons and food e.g. Nik-naks, crisps, Oros.

**Attention Grabber**.

Explain that today we are having a party. Explain why we are doing this – today is Pentecost Sunday which is regarded as the birthday of the Church – the day the church was born. We are going to learn about this today.

Have a big red blown up balloon on which is written the number of years of your church. Ask the children to guess what that number represents. (Don't tell them until the end of your discussion.

**Bible Readings:** Acts 2: 1- 8; 11-13; 14-24; 36 -41

Items needed (if possible):

- *A large fan with strips of yellow and orange crepe paper attached*
- *One burner stove, pot, uncooked popcorn and oil*
- *Orange and red party hats in the shape of flames*

Just before beginning the Bible readings heat the popcorn. Do not put the lid on.
Now read: Acts 2: 1-8. While reading verse 2-3, turn on the fan to its highest setting. The paper placed in front of the fan will blow all over, giving the impression of a huge wind with flames of fire. By the time you get to verse 4 the popcorn should start popping and jumping everywhere.
While reading verse 6, have the children greet each other in their own home language or a language of their choice.

Now read Acts 11-13. Pause at verse 13 and explain what is happening. Ask the children what the popcorn represents. Tell the kids that the people were like lifeless seeds of corn but when the Holy Spirit entered them they all became alive, full of power and energy.

Read Acts 2: 14 -21; 36 -41. (Note this is a long reading and you the teacher needs to summarise for the children.) Peter delivers the first sermon. Explain that Peter was giving the first message to the first Christians and preached about Jesus, the resurrection and some of the things that were prophesied about him. You don't need to go into too much detail but give the central message.

Also mention that Peter was enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak so boldly – remember he was the disciple that during Holy Week had denied knowing Jesus. Peter had no formal education but the Holy Spirit helped him to speak out in the manner that he did.

**Discussion and Explanation**

Ask the children why we are using so much red, orange and yellow? Then 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 - above each of Jesus' friends heads they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). This gives us a picture of the Holy Spirit, God's special gift that he gave the Church at Pentecost. The flames of fire, wind and speaking in tongues were all manifestations (or signs) of the

Holy Spirit which God sent to His people as a helper, so that they may be able to continue the work of Jesus.

What happened 10 days ago? *(Ascension Day – we remember that Jesus ascended into Heaven)*

Before Jesus left He promised His disciples that they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem. (Acts 1:8)

From the day of Pentecost, Jesus' followers devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, and breaking of bread and prayer – doesn't that sound like Church?! And the Lord added to their numbers daily. (Acts 2:42 – 47)

And that is how the first Church was born!

Let's continue with our party!

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 above each of Jesus' friend's heads)

The birth of your own church*:* Research and discuss with the children how your own church was started. Now ask the children what the number on the balloon from the beginning of the lesson represents.



Prayers:

The teacher says: We are the Church and you are our God. You fill us with love every day. We are the Church and you are our God. We're a body of people who pray.

The children can then say the Lord's Prayer in different languages, all at the same time, to continue with the idea of speaking in tongues and to get the effect of what was happening at the time.



Songs: Have a praise party! 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,

Tsollela Moya wa hao Jesu Tsollela Moya wa hao Jesu x2 Dipelong tsa rona Jesu Tsollela Moya wa hao Jesu	• Shout to the Lord • My God is so big • Give me oil in my lamp • This little light of mine

**Physical activity**: Give the children the opportunity to showcase their talents i.e. sing; dance, play an instrument. You can tell them the week before so that they can prepare. Remind the children we are all given different talents to help grow the church.

Or

Play party games when the children are finished eating.

**Snack:** Serve orange, red and yellow food and snacks and a birthday cake with candles. Have the children who are celebrating birthdays come forward and blow out the candles and cut the cake while singing, 'Happy Birthday to You…".

References:

Living Stones, S. Sayers, 2001

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

Three in one (The Trinity) *

Trinity Sunday
15 June

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*

(The younger children can simply memorize the names of the three persons of the Trinity. The teacher can help by saying that when we pray, we make the sign of the cross; we say, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.")

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 him as the one God who is 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.

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. But why the problem, what was all the debate about? Both the New Testament writers together with their fellow believers of the Old Testament days uncompromisingly believed that God was one. Yet at the same time they also believed that Jesus, the Messiah, was the Son of God. The basic issue at hand was: Is Jesus Christ God - is he really and fully God? If so, what does this tell us about the being of God? At a later stage the same question was asked about the Holy Spirit.

Through these debates, the church reached a consensus on the truth that God is three 'persons' yet one God- as declared in the Nicene Creed that we recite at our Holy Communion services on a Sunday.

Each of the beings in the Trinity is fully divine, none is 'more' God than any of the others, with each being having the same *nature* i.e. the essence of the divine being is one undivided being.

The Trinity is made up of God, the Father, Creator of everything; God the Son, who came down from Heaven to Earth and assumed our human nature and became man in Jesus. The third part is the Holy Spirit, who is our helper.

So Trinitarian teaching says that there is one God, but God is three persons who are united and co-operating in the one God, which we call TRI (=3) + UNITY (=1)

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

To know that God is one person but shows His love for us in three main ways; -

- God the Father – Creator,
- God the Son – Saviour
- God the Holy Spirit – the one who helps us.



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?

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:

Why are we talking about the number 3 today? Well, today is Trinity Sunday – "Tri" means 3 and therefore Trinity means 3.

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.

Let's talk about baptism.-A specific time when your mom and dad decided to take a promise to bring you up in the Christian faith. In the Anglican Church this usually happens when we are babies, although we can be baptised when we are older. Have you been baptized? Have you seen a baby being baptized? What happens at a baptism? (Mention that when we are baptized the priest will say that we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the Trinity.)

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. His handiwork can be seen in everything He created.

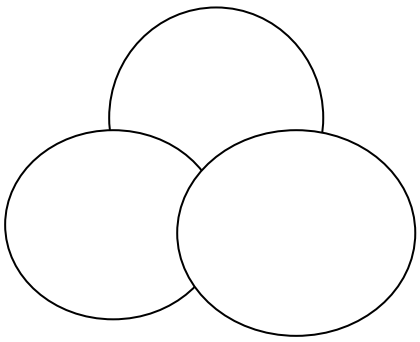
Ask the children to choose from the items in your collection things that represent God the Father and place them in the first circle e.g. flower, shells, pictures of animals

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.



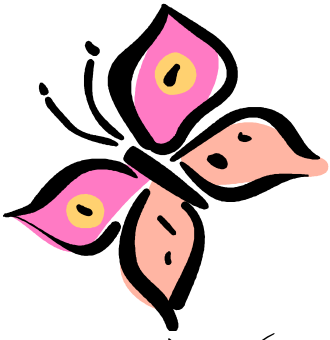


Physical activity:
Go outside and play 3-legged races.

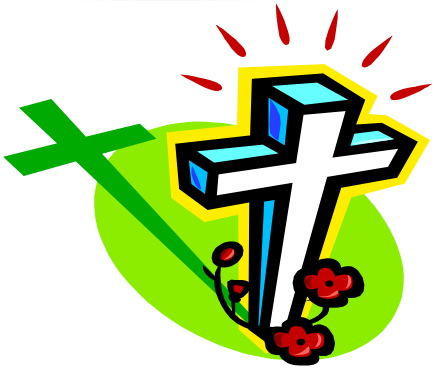
Why are we playing 3-legged races? *(Because God is made up of 3 parts – Father, Son and Holy Spirit)*

Craft:

- Have three paper plates (or 3 circular pieces of paper) for each child and position them as shown in the diagram on the previous page. Staple these together. The children can make shapes from play dough to represent the different forms of God and place them in the correct circle. Alternatively have pictures representing the different forms of God for the children to colour and add to the correct circle. Some pictures to aid you with this craft are found below.




- The Trinity Snowman – Children could make a snowman – teachers use your imagination! The following poem can be added to this craft:

When you see a snowman
Three snowballs round,
He is reminding you
That in God Three in One are found.

The bottom reminds us of God the Father,
Our strong rock and foundation
The Creator of all living things,
People, tribes and nations.

The middle shows us God the Son
with His arms spread open wide.
Who died on the cross for each of us
our sins Jesus' blood did hide.

The head reminds us of God the Holy Spirit
Who is our counsellor and friend,
He speaks to our hearts and minds
Transforming us in the likeness of Him.

So when you see a snowman
In the midst of all the wintertime fun,
Listen carefully and he'll tell you,
"Remember God is Three in One".

**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

Extra activity:

Diagrams on pg 88 of this lesson represent the Trinity. Allow the children to trace the diagrams with their fingers to get a better understanding of the “3 in 1” concept.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To grasp an understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity.
- To show how the Trinity idea of God helps one to understand God better.
- To discover that each one of us is called to share on God's own life.



Attention Grabber

Use the same idea as was used for the younger children.



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.

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)*

Possibly the best 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**. Ice is hard. It is solid. In the same way, God the Father 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 then carry five balloons as they race against other pairs. At the end of the race, the pair need to pop all their balloons without letting any of the balloons fall to the ground. The first pair to pop all their balloons is the winning team.



Questions:

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.



Prayer:

The diagrams on the page 88 all represent the Trinity – The children should look at them and decide which one means the most to them – perhaps discuss as a group.

Perhaps also encourage the children at this time to think of songs which refer to the Trinity. Here follows an example of a song:

Kalebitso la Ntate
Trinity
Kalebitso la Morwa
Trinity
Kalebitso la Moya
Trinity

Meditation is a form of prayer where you focus on a specific thought. During today's prayer, trace one of the diagrams with your finger. Do this a number of times and focus on the meaning of the Trinity. By tracing their fingers around the lines continuously, following the path of inter-relatedness, the children should sense the harmonious community of the One God,

Complete the prayer by incorporating all that has been discussed during this lesson.



Craft:

Make a book mark, weaving 3 cords together to represent the Trinity. You may like to attach to this card the words of the Baptismal Creed, found on page 59 of the Anglican Prayer Book.



Work sheets:

7 – 10 year olds: Worksheets on the Father, Son and Holy Spirit can be found at end this lesson.

10 – 13 year olds: There are a number of references in the Bible which refer to the Trinity. The Gospel of John, in particular, has many Trinitarian references. Look each reference up and identify which parts of the Trinity are represented in each verse. 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			

References

Rossini, E, 1996,*100 Activities For Grades 1to 8.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press

Snyman, D, 2008,*In the Gaze of God,* South Africa: AcadSA Publishing

Grudem, W, 1994,*Systematic Theology,* Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House

The Holy Trinity



TREFOIL





TRIQUETRA

Shown above is the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity as clearly expressed by the early armorists. It is fitting that this symbol be borne on shield or banner by churches dedicated to the Holy Trinity. The emblem is silver with black legend, on a red field.



CIRCLE WITHIN TRIANGLE



EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE



TRIANGLE IN CIRCLE



TRIQUETRA AND CIRCLE



THE THREE FISHES



INTERWOVEN CIRCLES

"I Believe in God the Father . . ."

NAME _____

Write the names of some things God has created.



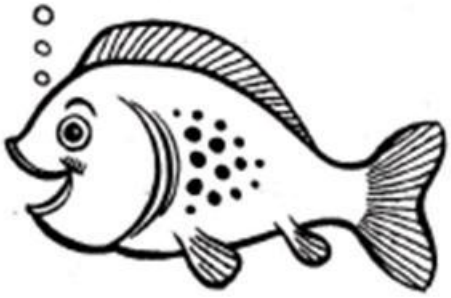
___ ___ ___ ☐ 1



___ ☐ ___ 2



___ ☐ ___ ___ ___ 3



___ ___ ___ ☐ 4



☐ ___ ___ 5



___ ___ ☐ ___ 6

Use the letters from the numbered boxes above to finish this sentence.

God is our ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐.
1 2 3 4 5 6

"I Believe in Jesus Christ"

NAME _____

Use the words on the right to complete the sentences.

Jesus is the _____ of God.

He came down from _____.

_____ is Jesus' birthday.

Jesus has a human Mother.

Her name is _____.

God gave Jesus a _____ father.

His name is Joseph.

Jesus came to _____ all people from their sins.

Jesus came to bring God's _____.

Christmas

foster

love

Heaven

save

Mary

Son

"I Believe in the Holy Spirit"

NAME _____

Read the story. Color the pictures.

When we pray, we make the Sign of the . We say, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Who is the Holy Spirit? We cannot  Him. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down like a . After Jesus rose from the dead, the Holy Spirit came to Mary and the Apostles as . The Holy Spirit is with us today in the . We believe in the Holy Spirit.

Color in the letters.

HOLY SPIRIT



Use Your Talents
(The parable of the talents)

Second Sunday after Pentecost
22 June

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:

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 he wants us to use them and invest 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.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To teach children that Jesus has given us special gifts which we must use.
- To teach them that he is happy when we use our special gifts.
- To help children to identify their talents and encourage them to develop them for use in God's Kingdom and everywhere.



Attention Grabber: Wrap a box up to look as though it is a present. Tell the little ones that God gives each of us special gifts. Open the present and show them pictures of children smiling, running, drawing, singing, dancing etc. Ask them what they are good at, and tell them that it is called a talent. If they would like, invite them to sing or do a dance. We must use the gifts that God has given us.



Bible Story and Discussion:

If you have a simple version of the parable of the talents, then use, but this bible reading might be too difficult for the little ones to comprehend. Instead you could tell them a story about someone who uses or used his talents/special gifts e.g. David playing on the harp.

Explain to the children that just as David played the harp to sing praises to God, we must use what God has given us.

We may not be able to play music or do things that are considered to be talents. However, we may have a gift to help others, to comfort them, to understand and pick up on how others are feeling.

If you have a chance to do something for God, do it willingly. God considers you very valuable and trusts you to make the world a better place, which is doing something for God using your gifts and abilities.



Craft:

1. Bee Thumb-body with Jesus

MATERIALS:



Fun Stamp pad and ink
White Construction paper
Yellow Construction paper
Assorted Markers, Glue sticks
Soap and water or pre-moistened napkins for clean-up

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

I can bee thumb-body with Jesus

At the bottom of the page print a line which states: **Family members please write the special talents of your child on this piece of paper.**

During class, make tiny little bees using thumb prints of the kids: Help the kids use an inkpad to make several thumbprints on their paper. Then help them glue on wings made from ovals cut from yellow construction paper. The kids can draw feelers and body decorations to each bee. Write each child's talents on his/her sheet. See www.dltk-bible.com for more "thumbody" ideas- making creatures out of thumb prints.

2. Make a pretty picture for God. Get the children to draw pretty pictures. Tell them that they are using their ability to draw.

Application: Sometimes children feel that they are not important because they are so young. Some may be longing for attention, others may be easily discouraged. Discuss with the children that they are somebody very important to Jesus. He has given them all talents (things that they are good at) and they must remember to make use of these things. Most importantly, help them to realise that with Jesus inside their hearts, they are **very** special some-bodies.



Snack: As all God's Children are smart, have a box of smarties and share them among the children.



Song: This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine.



Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for the gifts you have given us, that make us all different and yet all special in your eyes. Amen



Physical Activity: Go outside and play ball games.



Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To teach children the parable of the talents
- To teach them the importance of using their time, gifts and money to build God's Kingdom
- To encourage children to use the special gifts God has given them as a way of serving God and his people



Attention Grabber: What would you do if you won R1000000 in the lotto?



Bible Story: Lesson: Read Matthew 25: 14 -28

(A skit is provided at the end of this lesson should you like to present the Bible reading in a different way)



Discussion and Questions

Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. There are too many questions to discuss in one lesson, so choose the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles to their lives.

- Explain the meaning of a talent as referred to in the parable as well as its meaning today. *(In the parable, a talent referred to money, but today it can also refer to any resource we are given e.g. gifts, abilities and time)*
- Why did the master give different amounts of talents to each servant? (Matthew 25:15) How do your talents differ from your friends' talents? And your family members' talents? Why does God give different gifts to each of us? How can we show our gratitude to God for the particular gifts God has given to us?
- What did the servants who were given five and two talents do with their money? (Matthew 25:16–17) How do you think they were able to double their money? How can hard work be a blessing to us?

- What did the servant who was given one talent do with his money? (Matthew 25:18) Why do you think he did this? (Matthew 25:24–25) Why do you think some people don't develop their talents? What happens to people's talents if they do nothing with them? USE IT OR LOOSE IT.
- When the master returned and asked the servants to report to him, what did he say to the servant who had been given five talents? (Matthew 25:21) What did he say to the servant who had been given two talents? (Matthew 25:23) How does working hard to develop talents bless us? How have you been blessed by the talents or abilities of someone else?
- Why did the master give the same reward to the servant who had earned five talents and the servant who had earned two talents? (Matthew 25:21, 23)
- What did the master say to the servant who had been given one talent? (Matthew 25:26–27) Why was the master angry with this servant? What punishment did he give him for hiding the talent? (Matthew 25:28, 30) Why is how we use our abilities and talents more important than how many talents we have and what those talents are?
- Why do you think the master took the one talent from the lazy servant and gave to the servant who had ten? Was this fair? Why? Explain that the more we use our talents, the more talents we develop. If we do nothing with our talents, we will lose them. (See Matthew 25:29) Help the children understand that those people who seem to have fewer talents will receive every blessing if they use their talents to the fullest.
- What do you think Jesus was trying to teach us by telling the parable of the talents? Help the children understand that the Lord has given us talents, abilities, and opportunities. He expects us to use all these things to make our lives better and to serve others. He also wants us to show our gratitude by developing our talents.
- When and to whom will we give a report about what we have done with the gifts and talents we have been given? What do you want to be able to report? How would you feel if the Lord said to you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"
- How are you blessed by using your talents? *(Fulfilments; satisfaction; able to make a difference; success)*



Application Questions

What do all the following people have in common? Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Natalie duToit, Mark Shuttleworth. (Feel free to select other names your children are familiar with)

All are famous; all are South Africans; all have made it big; all came from humble beginnings, and with hard work and determination have made the world a better place.

- Nelson Mandela was born in 1918 in a small village. He was the first member of his family to attend school. He spent 27 years in prison for his fight against apartheid. When released he became our first black president and became a world statesman. What an amazing man!!!

  Do you think that when he was your age, he could ever have imagined that his life would turn out the way it did? When he was in prison do you think he knew that he would become such a hero of the Nation?

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu was born in Klerksdorp in 1931.He was very poor when he was growing up. He fought against apartheid and in 1984 won the Nobel Peace Prize. He has written numerous books and is active as a lecturer throughout the world.

  Do you work hard at school so that you can do well and go on to become a person that people look up to.

- Do you know about Natalie Du Toit? Do you know that she became a world class swimmer after she lost a left leg by amputation after a car hit her scooter while she was on her way to swimming practice? How much practicing do you think she had to do to compete with able bodied swimmers? Would you have continued swimming after the accident?

- Mark Shuttleworth was born in Welkom. He went to school and University in Cape Town. He gained worldwide fame in 2002 when he became the first South African to go into space. He founded the Shuttleworth Foundation gives a lot of money to Education.
  Would you give money that you have earned to help other people improve their lives?

Activities:

1. Give each child a piece of paper and ask him/ her to write down the special gifts God has given them. It might be running, swimming, dancing, drawing, singing, doing well at school etc. Then call out each child's name and ask the class what they see as his/hers special gift. If nothing is mentioned, you can offer words like helpful, listens well, tidies up, etc, so that each child is affirmed.

2. Discuss how you can use your talents to build to the kingdom of God. You can use visual aids such as a soccer ball, baking tin, bicycle etc..... Discuss that 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 for others with a cake sale; a cyclist could ask people to sponsor them for a particular charity.

3. This is also an opportunity to get the older classes involved with the running of the Sunday school:

   - 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.

All these duties could be rotated on a roster basis and will mean that the children have to become responsible and use their talents to help the Sunday school teachers.Maybe get someone from these groups to speak to the children and give them more information. It might also be a good time to

speak to them about dedicated giving and getting them to make a permanent commitment to serving God.

Make a chart for your class. Ask the children to write their names and put a tick under each activity that represents an area in which they can serve or are already serving. Put the chart on the wall as a reminder to the children of their commitment.

MY COMMITMENT TO GOD

	Junior Choir	Side's person	Server	Money	Playing an instrument	Other
NAME						

**Physical Activity:** Divide the class into two soccer teams. Choose goalies and play penalty shootouts.

**Snack:** Chocolate gold coins.

**Prayer**: Dear Lord, Thank you for making us all unique, by giving us different talents. Help us to us these talents to make your kingdom grow. Amen

References:

www.sermons4kids.com

http://www.kidssundayschool.com

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

SKIT

(You will need 15 coins)

The Master approaches 3 servants.

Master I want to give each of you something, according to your ability. *(Handing 5 coins to servant #1)* Here, take these 5 coins. *(Then handing 2 coins to servant #2)* Here you take these 2 coins. *(Then handing 1 coin to servant #3)* And you, take this one coin. I must go on a long journey, but I will return some day. *(Master walks away)*

Servant #1 I know what I will do with my 5 coins. I will start a business and help people all over town. I'm sure my business will do very well. *(Servant #1 walks to teacher and gets 5 more coins)*

Servant #2 I know what I will do with my 2 coins. I will invest them and earn much interest. *(Servant #2 walks to teacher and gets 2 more coins)*

Servant #3 I know what I will do. I do not want to loose my coin, so I will bury it in the backyard, so nobody will steal it. *(Servant #3 hides under a table)*

(The Master returns home)

Master *(Looking at servant #1)* Well tell me, what have you done with the 5 coins I gave you so long ago?

Servant #1 Look, you trusted me with 5 coins and I built a nice business using them. See, here are 5 more coins, 10 in all.

Master Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come share in my happiness. *(Then look at servant #2)* Well tell me, what have you done with the 2 coins I gave you so long ago?

Servant #2 Look, you trusted me with 2 coins, and I have invested them. Look here I have gained two more, 4 in all.

Master Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come share in my happiness. *(Then looking at servant #3)* Well tell me, what have you done with the 1 coin I gave you so long ago?

Servant #3 I was very afraid because you are a hard man, using what others have, so I hid the money where nobody could find it, so here it is.

Master You wicked, good for nothing, lazy servant! If you knew I expected more back than what I gave, you should have at least put the coin in the bank in order to earn interest. Everyone who uses what he has will be given even more, but anyone who does not use what is given to him, it will be taken away. So now give your coin to the servant who has 10 coins.

(Servant #3 gives the 1 coin to servant #1, then goes back under the table.)