



Christian Formation
Episcopal Diocese of Texas

FALL CURRICULUM

2008

What is this curriculum?

Goals

- " To have this curriculum available online.
- " To have this curriculum in a totally ready to use form for those who need the extra help. The kits will include the children's literature selections, craft supplies and directions.
- " To provide faith formation activities that can be used in the home
- " To provide something that could be used as a weeknight program
- " If you have the supporting materials available you can use the online curriculum. The children's literature selections can be found in your local or school libraries or ordered from Amazon, etc.
- " To provide a curriculum for our "Little Churches".

How to use the curriculum

- " The curriculum is designed to be used in a 45 minute session on Sunday morning.
- " The curriculum could also be used as a one hour weeknight session, either in age groups or as an intergenerational event. Please refer to the next page for specific intergenerational lesson planning.
- " The curriculum can also be used in the homes during the week with the Bible study continuing during the week. The children's literature selection could also be read at home during the week. Some families may have some of these books at home, or can check them out of the local library or school library.
- " The curriculum is designed for children K-5th Grade, Youth 6-12th grade and Adults. Younger children can listen to the Bible story and do a simpler art response.

Preparing for the lesson

- " Read the Bible passage and familiarize yourself with the particular Bible study method proposed for youth and/or adults for the session.
- " Read the children's Bible passage translation.
- " Read the children's literature selection.
- " Make preparations for the art response
- " Be prepared ahead of time and be early so that your classroom is ready when the learners arrive.

Using this curriculum in an intergenerational setting.

- " The time together can begin with opening prayer found on first page of the curriculum.
- " You may tell the Bible story to the whole group.
- " Or, you may break into adult and youth group and then the children's group separately.
- " Adults and youth can read and participate in the Bible study while the children hear the story on their own level.
- " Then all gather for the art response - adults and youth can assist children or make a more sophisticated response or continue in discussion.
- " The entire group could then convene for the reading of the children's literature selection and have conversation following that story. How do the biblical story and the children's literature piece compliment one another, shed new insight or make the story alive in another direction?
- " You may include refreshments or in the case of the lesson with Stone Soup, make a meal together with all contributing.
- " *The Rag Coat* would allow the whole group to bring fabric and perhaps make an altar hanging or banner quilt for the parish hall.

Suggested time schedule

45 minute session

Gathering.....	5 minutes
Bible Story.....	5 minutes
Wondering/discovery.....	5 minutes
Children's Story.....	10 minutes
Response.....	15 minutes
Closing.....	5 minutes

If you have more or less time, adjust accordingly.

Creating a Sacred Space for the Lesson

Greet each child as they enter and invite them to sit in a circle on the floor – no chairs are needed. Ask how they are doing.

Begin the class time with prayer.

Read or tell the Bible story. Remember that you are the curriculum from which they will learn the most – so practice and let the Story be your story. Don't rush. It is better to do fewer things and do them well and with purpose than to rush through the agenda.

If you don't have the children's books and can't get them through your community library, school library or from people in your church, please contact Janie Stevens at the Diocesan Center and she will get the books to you. If you have difficulty in getting the extra materials, please let her know that as well.

Janie Stevens
Missioner for Christian Formation
Episcopal Diocese of Texas
713.520.6444/800.318.4452
jstevens@epicenter.org

Bibliography

The Anglican Family Prayer Book, Anne E. Kitch, Morehouse Publishing
The Book of Common Prayer, Episcopal Church
I Sing a Song of the Saints of God, Lesbia Scott, Morehouse Publishing
In Dialogue with Scripture, The Episcopal Church
John for Everyone, Tom Wright, Westminster John Knox Press
Mama, Do You Love Me?, Barbara M. Jooose, Chronicle Books
Matthew for Everyone, Part One, Tom Wright, Westminster John Knox Press
Noah's Ark, Peter Spier, Dell Dragonfly Books
Peanut Butter and Jelly Prayers, Julie B. Sevig, Morehouse Publishing
The Rag Coat, Lauren Mills, Little, Brown and Company
The Relatives Came, Cynthia Rylant, Bradbury Press
The Rainbow Fish, Marcus Pfister, North-South Books
The Sneetches and Other Stories (What Was I Scared Of?), Dr. Seuss, Random House
Stone Soup, Marcia Brown, Atheneum Books for Young Readers
Synthesis, A Weekly Resource for Preaching & Worship in the Episcopal Tradition
The Table Where Rich People Sit, Byrd Baylor, Alladin Paperbacks
Young Children and Worship, Sonja M. Stewart & Jerome W. Berryman, Westminster/John Knox

Prayers

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to you never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that you are doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
(BCP 831)

O God of peace, who has taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 832)

Crafts

Using the teacher's story materials

Noah's Ark – If you do not have access to storytelling materials, cut out the cardstock animals, dove and ark to use when telling the story. These materials are also provided for children to take home so that they can retell the story.

The Good Shepherd - If you do not have access to storytelling materials, cut out the figures for telling this story. These materials are also provided for children to take home so that they can retell the story.

The Good Samaritan - If you do not have access to storytelling materials, cut out the figures for telling this story. These materials are also provided for children to take home so that they can retell the story.

The Rainbow Fish – Neon sticker scales for decorating the fish are included in the kit.

Feeding the 5000 – Bread, fish and baskets can be cut out to be used as storytelling materials. The pieces may be passed out to children before the story so that they can add their pieces as it is told. A separate coloring sheet is included with this story.



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St. Francis

Focus

We remember this gentle and wonderful saint today

Scripture

Gen. 1:20-25

Other Resources

Blessing of Animals/Pets liturgy attached
<http://www.wtv-zone.com/phyrst/audio/nfld/15/creatures.htm>. Copy and paste into your browser.

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Oh divine master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Scripture (taken from NRSV)

Genesis 1:20-25

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and morning, the fifth day. And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind; cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good."

Why do we bless pets on this day?

St. Francis of Assisi lived in Italy in the 12th century. Francis grew up in a wealthy family, but as a young man, he renounced his wealth and worldly possessions and lived very simply.

When Francis spoke, everyone listened, including the animals. He told the animals that Jesus loved them too.

In honor of this blessed saint of the church we gather today with our animals - our pets, our service animals, police dogs and horses, zoo animals and all God's creatures and give thanks for what they do for us and for what they mean to us.

Stories about Francis

Francis was born into a very wealthy family in Italy but as a young man, he decided to give all his wealth, his clothes - everything he had to help poor people. His family was furious and tried to keep him from doing this. He left his family and went on to found a religious order that is today known as the Franciscan order. The monks wear brown robes with a cowl collar. They shave their hair to remind them of the crown of thorns that was placed on Jesus' head on that Good Friday. They live in a vow of poverty and give all they have to the people around them.

Stories of Francis' love for animals and the earth abound. He wrote canticles (songs) to the sun, about plants and water and sky. He wrote prayers and told stories about animals. He believed that animals were loved by God and so deserved our love and care and honor.

There was a wolf who lived in the town of Gubbio, Italy. The wolf came into the town each evening, frightening the inhabitants or eating them. Francis went to speak to "Brother Wolf" and discovered that the wolf was hungry. Francis explained that being hungry was not reason enough to eat people and their pets, or to terrorize them. The wolf became very gentle, the people fed him and he gave the children in the town rides on his back.

In the town of Gubbio, Francis built a small outdoor stable and put people in the stable to portray Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the angels. Then he added the animals - cow, donkey, sheep, etc. When asked, Francis said, "Surely the animals praised the new Messiah just as the shepherds and angels did." And so today, we have Christmas creches with people and animals praising the newborn Messiah.



For Children

Tell one or more of the stories of Francis. The children may enjoy participating in a pet blessing and a copy of an order of service is attached to this curriculum. Many pets have been through a lot the last month and we should honor them and their love for us.

Art Response

Children may like to smear peanut butter on pine cones and roll the cone in bird seed and then hang it where they can watch the birds eat it. They may also like to bring donations of pet food for the local shelters or SPCA.

You could make an animal mask using the paper plates in the curriculum box (if you are using that resource). See directions. They might bring a stuffed animal from home to decorate around the altar. You could stick stuffed animals throughout the sanctuary - snakes in the stairwell railing, bears on the speakers, etc.

For Youth

For this event, all of the parish will participate in the St. Francis liturgy for blessing pets.



For Adults

Intergenerational pet blessing and St. Francis liturgy should be an order for the day. Adults may like to read the prayer of St. Francis, thinking about recent experiences.

The Liturgy for Blessing of Pets/Animals is attached to this curriculum. Please feel free to make appropriate number of copies.



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Noah

Focus

To remind us that God cares for us and loves us.

Scripture

Genesis 6:14-7:12 (paraphrased)

Other Resources

Noah's Ark
What Was I Scared Of?

Prayer

As we go about our work and play this week may we be mindful of others, merciful God. Many in the world will go to bed hungry or afraid this night. Bless them and help us be a blessing to them. In the name of Jesus, our example of grace and mercy. Amen.

(from Peanut Butter and Jelly Prayers, by Julie B. Sevig, Morehouse Publishing)

Scripture (taken from NRSV)

Genesis 6:14-7:12 (paraphrase)

God said to Noah, "Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind shall come in to you, to keep them alive. Also take with you every kind of food that is eaten, and store it up, and it shall serve as food for you and for them." Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Then the Lord said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground." And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. The waters swelled so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark.

But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the

ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed ...and the waters gradually receded from the earth. At the end of one hundred and fifty days the waters had abated; and the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

At the end of forty days, Noah opened the window of the ark and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; it did not return to him anymore.

Noah removed the covering from the ark and looked and saw that the face of the ground was drying. Then God said to Noah, "Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you and be fruitful and multiply on the earth. And they left the ark.

Noah built an altar to God. God said, "I will establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

For Children

The Story:

If you have an ark available you may plan to use it or the book in the curriculum.

Allow the children to carefully place the animals and Noah and family in the ark if possible. Very deliberately close the door to the ark or pull up the ladder, etc. to reaffirm that all were safe. And then when the water has gone down and the dove doesn't return, have the children carefully open the ark and take the animals out and put them in a "safe place."

If your nave has the traditional ship ceiling and you can bring the children into the nave, have them lie down on the floor and look up at the ceiling. Talk about how it reminds us of a boat - the ark, as a matter of fact, and that early Christians referred to the building in which they worshiped as the ship of salvation.

God cared for Noah and Noah's family and the animals. No one got off the ark until it was safe to do so and God gave Noah and his family the gift of the rainbow and a promise.

The Reflection:

Following the story you may wish to use these questions.

1. I wonder how it must have felt to be in that ark?
2. I wonder how Noah felt when the dove returned?
3. I wonder how Noah felt when the dove did not return?
4. I wonder how the animals felt when they got off the ark?
5. I wonder if you have ever been afraid?

The Art Response:

Provide paper and crayons, colored pencils and markers for children to illustrate the story. If you use the pattern of the ark to color help them finish the work to take it home.

Children's Story

The children's book selection for this story is *What Was I Scared Of?* by Dr. Seuss. Engage the children in conversation afterwards using questions 5 and 6 above.

For Youth

Open with prayer

The following Bible Study method is often called the Oral Tradition Method or African Bible Study.”

This is taken from *In Dialogue with Scripture*.

Before the reading, ask people to listen for the word or phrase that catches their attention. Do plan to use the printed version of the reading from this curriculum. For this particular method of Bible study it is imperative that all read from the same version. Ask someone to read the passage slowly.

Ask participants to recall and write down the word or phrase that caught their attention. Invite participants to say the word or phrase with the group.

Ask someone else to read the passage and invite participants to think/write about “Where does this passage touch my life, my community, our nation, our world today?” Invite to them to think about all the people they would encounter, not just those in their own “circle of friends.” Invite the group to share.

Ask a third reader to read the passage and ask participants to think/write about: “From what I have heard and shared, what does God want me to do or be this week? How does God invite me to change?” The group may share these thoughts.

It is important to remember to keep the responses brief. Do not elaborate, explain or teach. It is not a discussion group in this particular format.

For Adults

Adults can use the format for Youth.



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Good Shepherd

Focus

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. We are his sheep and he calls us by name.

Scripture

Psalm 23

Luke 15: 3-7

Other Resources

Mama, Do You Love Me, by Barbara Joosse

Prayer

We thank you, loving God that you care for us with the gentle touch of a mother, the loving presence of a father.

Bless all who lead in our homes, schools and work in this country and in our world.

May they be slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

May we - both children and adults - cherish one another and treat all people according to the example of Jesus, who is with us today. Amen. (*Peanut Butter and Jelly Prayers*, Julie B. Sevig, Morehouse Publishing)

Scripture (taken from NRSV)

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
He revives my soul
and guides me along the right pathways
for his Name's sake.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow
of death,
I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they
comfort me.
You spread a table before me in the presence of
those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.
Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

Luke 15: 3-6

So he told them this parable: Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost."

The story for children

Use the figures of the Good Shepherd and the sheep with these materials to tell the story. Move each figure very slowly and deliberately. Don't rush.

There once was someone who said such amazing things and did such wonderful things that people began to follow him. But they didn't know who he was.. So one day they simply had to ask him and he said....

I am the Good Shepherd. I know each one of my sheep by name.

And they know the sound of my voice. So when I call my sheep from the sheepfold, they follow me.

I walk in front of the sheep to show them the way.

I show them the way to the good green grass. I show them the way to the cool, clear, still water. And when there are places of danger.

I show them the way to pass through.

So they can come safely home to the sheepfold.

But if one is missing, I go and find that sheep and bring it back safely to the sheepfold.

For Children

Wondering Questions

1. Recall the story of Noah last week. What can we bring from that story to this one?
2. What are the places of danger we have found?
3. I wonder where this place really is (gesture to the shepherd and sheep)
4. I wonder if the sheep have names? . . .
5. I wonder if the sheep are happy in this place? . . .
6. I wonder how many sheep really could live in this place? . . .
7. I wonder if you have ever had to go through places of danger?
8. I wonder how the sheep feel with the Good Shepherd? . . .
9. I wonder if you have ever heard the Good Shepherd call your name?

Art Response

Help the children color, cut out and glue onto popsicle sticks the figures of the Good Shepherd and the sheep. Encourage them to take these home and tell the story to their families.

Children's Story

Mama, Do You Love Me?

Remind the children that there was no place the little girl could go or anything that she could do that would keep her mother from loving her. God is like that too.

For Youth

You may wish to make copies of the clip art icons of the Good Shepherd for each learner and provide colored pencils for them to color and then put in their room. You may wish to purchase wooden plaques from a craft store for them to glue the icon on.

For Adults

Using the two scripture passages, select two readers - one to read the Psalm and one to read the parable. Then discuss:

1. When have you been in places of danger?
2. Have you ever heard the Good Shepherd call your name?
3. You may like to rewrite the 23rd Psalm in your own words reflecting your own situation at this point in time.



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When were you hungry?

Focus

Whatever we do for anyone we do for the Lord.

Scripture

Matthew 25: 34-41

Other Resources

The Rag Coat, Lauren Mills, Little, Brown and Company

Prayer

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer, "For the Poor and the Neglected" page 826)



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All Saints

Focus

Saints are ordinary people like you and me who hear and respond to God's call in a certain way.

Scripture

Matthew 5:1-12

Ecclesiasticus 44: 1-10; 13-14

Revelation to John 7:2-4, 9-17

Other Resources

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God, Lesbia Scott

The Relatives Came, Cynthia Rylant

Prayer

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.
(Collect for All Saints' Day, *Book of Common Prayer*)

Scripture (taken from NRSV)

Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.

Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Ecclesiasticus 44: 1-10, 13-14

Let us now sing the praises of famous men, our ancestors in their generations.

The Lord apportioned to them great glory, his majesty from the beginning.

There were those who ruled in their kingdoms, and made a name for themselves by their valor; those who gave counsel because they were intelligent; those who spoke in prophetic oracles; those who led the people by their counsels and by their knowledge of the people's lore; they were wise in their words of instruction; those who composed musical tunes, or put verses in writing; rich men endowed with resources, living peacefully in their homes - all these were honored in their generations, and were the pride of their times.

Some of them have left behind a name, so that others declare their praise.

But of others there is no memory; they have perished as

though they had never existed; they have become as though they had never been born, they and their children after them. But these also were godly men, whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten; Their offspring will continue forever, and their glory will never be blotted out. Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name lives on generation after generation.

John 7:2-4, 9-17

I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel.

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?"

I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."



For Children

We will use the book *I Sing a Song of the Saints of God* as the lesson for the children today. In the back of the book is a biographical sketch of each of the saints we sing about in the hymn. Perhaps you will sing this hymn in your worship today.

Art Response

The children may enjoy learning about each of the saints and then decorating a small pumpkin to look like their saint. They can take these home and tell their parents about the saints.

Perhaps someone could sing the hymn with them in class.

If you are planning to make the soup next week remind children to bring an ingredient for the soup. Invite the congregation to lunch.

You also may wish to send home recipe cards for the families to write one or two favorite comfort food recipes that can then be shared with the whole congregation.

Children's Story

Recall a time when your family came together. Was it fun and exciting? Were there a lot of them? Did you miss them when they left? When will you see them again?

For Youth

Using the newspaper and magazines invite the youth to make collages based on the Ecclesiasticus eading. They may wish to title their collage "We now sing the praises of famous people". Read the passage first and then invite them to make the collage.

Allow time for sharing of the collages



For Adults

From Synthesis, Year A Sunday after All Saints' Day

“The early festivals of the Church included commemorations of the martyrs who had died for their faith. But All Saints' Day is also a time to remember all of God's faithful people in every place and time.

The readings today reflect writings from the ancient church when Joshua ben Sirach combined Jewish and Near Eastern wisdom traditions with the teachings of the Torah in his writings. These words from Ecclesiasticus were from the beginning of an epic poem in honor of the ancestors mentioned in the previous chapter of this book. Those whose names were remembered were praised, but so were those whose names were not remembered. The Beatitudes give us a vision of Jesus' proclamation that the Kingdom of heaven has come near and describes a way of life expected of those who would follow Jesus. The Revelation reading provided hope to the early persecuted church.

Do we too often look for extraordinary examples of faith and life? We can't all be Mother Teresas. When we don't see heroics we often dismiss the notion of someone being a saint. Saints are ordinary people of faith. They are people just like you and me.

Saints are saints because of their faith in the amazing grace of God, not their heroic deeds or faith. They are righteous before God not because they have earned it, but because of Christ. We are ordinary saints in a second significant way. We are called to respond to God's grace in Christ by lives of thankful obedience in very ordinary places of responsibility. This takes place in our marriages, our work, our public life as citizens and volunteers and in church. We are to use our talents and freedom to sense and pursue God's intentions for us.

We have a part to play in God's story. Luther and John Calvin both emphasized that work in the world, even the most humble kind, has religious significance because it helps the neighbor and pleases God. Such work preserves and enriches the world. We have callings as parents, citizens, friends, students and workers.



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FALL CURRICULUM

2008

Feeding the 5,000

Focus

God is generous and will provide for us - the theology of abundance rather than the theology of scarcity.

Scripture

John 6: 5-14

Other Resources

Stone Soup, Marcia Brown, Athenium Books for Young Readers

Prayer

Lord of joy, be our guest at our table today.
Make our meal into a feast that is pleasing to you.
For the gifts you give us we now give thanks.
God, who hears us even before we pray, praise be to you. Amen.
(*Peanut Butter and Jelly Prayers*, Julie B. Sevig, Morehouse Publishing)

Scripture (taken from NRSV)

John 6:5-14

When he (Jesus) looked up and saw a large crowd, coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of this disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is come into the world."

For children

Because there were many people who needed to hear of the kingdom of God, Jesus sent the twelve disciples or helpers out to preach, teach, and heal.

The disciples came and told Jesus all that had happened. Then Jesus and the disciples went to a quiet place in the hills where they could be alone for a while.

The crowd of people heard that Jesus had gone to the hills. "We're going to see Jesus," they said eagerly. "He says such amazing things and does such wonderful things. Let's go find him."

A boy saw all the people going the same way. Mothers, father, and children were all hurrying in one direction. The boy asked one of the children, "where are you going?" "To see Jesus," said one child.

The boy hurried home to his mother. "There are lots of people going to the hills to see Jesus. Please, can I go too?" His mother said, "yes, but let me give you some food in case you get hungry."

She packed five small loaves and two fish and gave the lunch to her son.

The boy ran and ran until he caught up with all the people. At last all the people came to the place where Jesus was.

Jesus look at all the people and welcomed them. He healed the sick. He caused the blind people to see. He helped the deaf people to hear. All the sick people were made well. Jesus taught the people about the kingdom of God. He told them, "God in heaven loves you, and you must love each other." But the day grew late, the sun was going down, and it was supper time.

The disciples said to Jesus, "Send the people away to the villages to buy food. They are hungry and it is time to eat." Jesus said, "you feed them." "But Jesus, it would take much money, more than we have to feed all these people." They looked around and saw the boy with the lunch.

Andrew said, "Here is a boy with five small loaves and two small fish, but how far will that go among these people?"

Jesus said, "Have the people sit down."

The disciples helped the people sit on the grass in groups of fifty and one hundred.

Jesus took the small loaves. He looked up to heaven and thanked God for the food. Then he broke the loaves into pieces. He gave the bread to the disciples to give to the people. He broke the fish into pieces also and the disciples gave it to the people. The people ate until they were full. Jesus told the disciples to take some baskets and go around the gather up the left-overs.

The disciples gathered up twelve baskets of left-overs. The little boy had shared his lunch, and Jesus blessed it so everyone had enough to eat.

For Children

Wondering Questions

1. I wonder how it felt to listen to Jesus teach?
2. I wonder how the people felt when supper time came and there was no food?
3. I wonder if it was hard for the little boy to share his lunch?
4. I wonder if you have ever shared and there was enough for everyone?

Children's Story

The little boy's lunch was a small one – just enough for a little boy, yet Jesus blessed it and it fed 5,000 people with left-overs. Three rocks and a lot of love made the soldiers' soup in the story into enough to feed the village.

After reading the story, ask the children if their neighborhood or families each brought food to a big festive meal that would not have been so big or festive if they had eaten alone.

You may want to ask children to bring an ingredient for the soup to church the following Sunday or this Sunday (asked ahead of time) and make a big pot of soup for the whole congregation to enjoy after church that day.

Have blank recipe cards for the children to take home and have their families choose 2 or 3 of their most favorite comfort food meals and write the recipes on the cards and then bring them next week to share. You could make photocopies of the recipes for the whole congregation then.

For Youth

1. As a group, decide upon a modern situation that is similar to the biblical one.
2. Individually write how you imagine the modern situation unfolding, as if it were a scene you were observing.
3. Discuss your different scenes. What do the scenes say about what is important for you in the passage?
4. What do the scenes say about how the biblical passage can be applied to life today? Individually identify a scene from your own life (personal, school, work, social or political) related to the scene you constructed.
5. Share how you will use what you have learned from the Bible passage.

For Adults

In his book *John for Everyone Part 1*, Tom Wright reminds us that this gospel story appears in all four gospels and takes place during Passover. Jesus provides food for a large group of people out in the wilderness. There are many little touches that invite us to enter into the scene imaginatively and perhaps identify with one or other of the characters. The story in John is told in a more intimate way than in the other three gospels. John mentions the little boy and Philip and Andrew are given speaking roles. Andrew finds the little boy and introduces him to Jesus. Philip doesn't know what to do and neither does Andrew. The point is obvious but we need to be reminded of it - so often we ourselves have no idea what to do but the starting point is always to bring what is there to the attention of Jesus. You can never tell what he's going to do with it, though part of Christian faith is the expectation that he will do something we hadn't thought of. (*John for Everyone Part 1*, Tom Wright)

You may wish to use the following Bible study method from *In Dialogue with Scripture*

1. Ask someone to read the text aloud.
2. Ask the group to spend a couple of minutes in silence, identifying and writing down the words, phrases or images that catch their attention.
3. Ask each person who chooses to, to say no more than one or two words, phrases or images he or she has written. The rest of the group should listen and not respond.
4. Read the passage a second time.
5. Ask the group to reflect silently and write down the themes and concerns they hear in the passage.
6. Invite people to share their themes and concerns, again without discussion or lengthy telling.
7. Read the above passage from Tom Wright's book *John for Everyone Part 1*.
8. Invite people to listen to the passage again and listen for insights and challenges that may arise for them in the passage and for how the passage relates to issues they are dealing with in their lives at the moment - both personally and communally.
9. Invite people to share what insights they have had and what challenges they have heard that relates to the issues they have identified.
10. Close with prayer

You may invite all to join in the soup for which the children brought the ingredients and with help made the soup. Invite the children to tell the story of *Stone Soup*.



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FALL CURRICULUM

2008



Good Samaritan

Focus

Who is our neighbor?
How do we treat our neighbor?

Scripture

Luke 10:25-37

Other Resources

Rainbow Fish, Marcus Pfister, North-South Books

Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (*Anglican Family Prayer Book*)

Scripture (taken from NRSV)

Luke 10:25-37

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

For children

Once there was someone who said such amazing things, and did such wonderful things, that people began to follow him. One day a lawyer asked him, "What is the most important law?" And he answered, "You already know."

The lawyer said, "Yes. We are to love God and love our neighbors. . . . But who is my neighbor?"

So Jesus told a parable. A person was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and robbers. . . . came and attacked him . . . and hurt him . . . and took everything that he had . . . and left him by the road, half dead.

A great priest from the Temple in Jerusalem was going down the road. When he saw him . . . he passed by on the other side.

A Levite, a person who also worked at the Temple, was going down to Jericho. When he saw him . . . he passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan . . . who was not even from the same country. . . came to where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion . . . and went to him. He put medicine and bandages on his cuts and put him on his donkey . . . and brought him to an inn . . . and stayed with him all night.

He told the innkeeper that the man could stay until he was well and he would pay for it all.

Now, which of these three was a neighbor to the person who was hurt, and robbed, and left by the side of the road half dead?

For Children

Wondering Questions

1. I wonder if the person who was left by the side of the road half dead has a name?...
2. I wonder where the road was really going? . . .
3. I wonder who was a neighbor to the robber? . . .
4. I wonder who was a neighbor to the priest? . . .
5. I wonder who was a neighbor to the Levite? . . .
6. I wonder who was a neighbor to the Samaritan? . . .
7. I wonder how a Samaritan could be a neighbor? . . .
8. Who are your neighbors?
9. Are you a neighbor?

Children's Book

Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister

1. Did the Good Samaritan share?
2. Did the Rainbow fish share?
3. What made him want to share?
4. What can you share?
5. Why do you want to share?

Art Response

Make fish per the pattern. Make “scales” out of aluminum foil or use foil stickers to decorate your fish. Share your fish’s scales with others in the classroom.

How has it felt to share with others during this time?

How has it felt for others to share with you during this time?

For Youth

1. Using the reading of the Good Samaritan, ask someone read the text aloud, using the version with this curriculum.
2. Write down words, phrases or images that catch your attention.
3. Ask each person who chooses to do so to say no more than one or two words, phrases or images they have written. Everyone else listens and doesn’t respond.
4. Read the story a second time and identify themes and concerns in the passage. Repeat with sharing.
5. Read the third time and listen for insights and challenges that may arise and for how the passage relates to issues they are dealing with in their lives both personally and communally.
6. Share these with the group.

For Adults

1. Using the reading of the Good Samaritan, ask someone read the text aloud, using the version with this curriculum.
2. Write down words, phrases or images that catch your attention.
3. Ask each person who chooses to do so to say no more than one or two words, phrases or images they have written. Everyone else listens and doesn't respond.
4. Read the story a second time and identify themes and concerns in the passage. Repeat with sharing.
5. Read the third time and listen for insights and challenges that may arise and for how the passage relates to issues they are dealing with in their lives both personally and communally.
6. Share these with the group.



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For Children

Listen to the story Jesus told his friends. There has been a lot to be worried about lately. We have seen a lot of people worrying and maybe we have been worrying too.

Wondering

Does Jesus' story make you feel better? How can it help us?

Now listen to the story *The Table Where Rich People Sit*.

What is the little girl worrying about?

What do her parents do to help her not worry any more?

In the end, does she feel okay?

Make a table out of construction paper. Draw your family around the table. Draw your blessings (or if you have magazines cut out pictures of things you have) that you are thankful for.

Invite families to bring something for which they are thankful from home to present at the altar at the offertory during the worship. The object could also be something that is representative of them. The idea is to present yourself, soul and body, to the Lord.

For Youth

1. Read the passage from Matthew. If you have other versions have someone read from those.
2. There has been a lot to worry about. What does the passage say to you about worrying?
3. Make a list of all the things for which you are thankful.
4. Litanies are prayers consisting of a series of invocations followed by a response from others. Look in the *Book of Common Prayer* on page 836 at "A Litany of Thanksgiving". Using that format, write your own personal Thanksgiving litany that you may wish to use at your family's Thanksgiving dinner.

Invite families to bring something for which they are thankful from home to present at the altar at the offertory during the worship. The object could also be something that is representative of them. The idea is to present yourself, soul and body, to the Lord.



For Adults

Tom Wright in his book *Matthew for Everyone Part 1* says it strikes him that Jesus was such a happy person. He had a strong lively sense of the goodness of God. His teaching grew out of his own experience. He seems to have had the skill of living totally in the present. He wanted his followers to be the same way. He urged them to make God their priority. He is not talking about a god who is distant from the world, who doesn't care about beauty and life and food and clothes. He's talking about the creator himself, who has filled the world with wonderful and mysterious things, full of beauty and energy and excitement, and who wants his human creatures above all to trust him and love him and receive their own beauty, energy and excitement from him.

So when Jesus tells us not to worry about what to eat or drink or wear, he doesn't mean that these things don't matter. He doesn't mean that we should prefer to eat and drink as little as possible and to wear disreputable clothes just to show that we despise such things. Far from it! Jesus liked a party as much as anyone and when he died the soldiers so admired his tunic that they threw dice for it rather than tearing it up. But the point was again priorities. Put the world first, and you'll find it gets moth-eaten in your hands. Put God first, and you'll get the world thrown in.

Nor does Jesus mean, of course, that we should not plant seeds and reap harvests or that we should not work at weaving and spinning to make clothes. Rather we should do these things with joy because our God is the creator of all and wants to feed and clothe us - not gloomily, as though God were a mean tyrant who was out to get us and make life difficult for us. Of course, because we live in a world filled with anxiety, it is easy to let it rub off on us. But the underlying principles of the whole Sermon on the Mount (lesson on All Saints Sunday) come together at this point in a huge but exhilarating challenge. God's kingdom and the way of life that goes with it, marks out God's people; these are the things you should aim at. Then you'll find that food, drink and clothing look after themselves.

Questions for discussion

1. There has been a lot to worry about .
2. Does the passage today help you get your worries under control?
3. Or, does the passage give you some insight into how to begin this step?
4. Look at the "Litany for Thanksgiving" on page 836-37 in the *Book of Common Prayer*. You may wish to use this prayer this week of Thanksgiving.

Invite families to bring something for which they are thankful from home to present at the altar at the offertory during the worship. The object could also be something that is representative of them. The idea is to present yourself, soul and body, to the Lord.



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BRINGING THE LESSONS HOME

2008

What is this curriculum?

Goals

- " The curriculum is designed for children K-5th Grade, Youth 6-12th grade and Adults. Younger children can listen to the Bible story and do a simpler art response.
- " To provide something can be used in the home

How to use the curriculum

- " The curriculum can also be used in the homes during the week with the Bible study continuing during the week. The children's literature selection could also be read at home during the week. Some families may have some of these books at home, or can check them out of the local library or school library.

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Mama, Do You Love Me?, Barbara M. Joosse, Chronicle Books
Matthew for Everyone, Part One, Tom Wright, Westminster John Knox Press
Noah's Ark, Peter Spier, Dell Dragonfly Books
Peanut Butter and Jelly Prayers, Julie B. Sevig, Morehouse Publishing
The Rag Coat, Lauren Mills, Little, Brown and Company
The Relatives Came, Cynthia Rylant, Bradbury Press
The Rainbow Fish, Marcus Pfister, North-South Books
The Sneetches and Other Stories (What Was I Scared Of?), Dr. Seuss, Random House
Stone Soup, Marcia Brown, Atheneum Books for Young Readers
Synthesis, A Weekly Resource for Preaching & Worship in the Episcopal Tradition
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Young Children and Worship, Sonja M. Stewart & Jerome W. Berryman, Westminster/John Knox

Activities for Home

For Home Devotions

For the month of October make a center for your home devotions by taking a large sheet of green construction paper to serve as the base. Cut out pumpkin shapes from orange construction paper for each member of your family and tape them to the green paper. Write each person's name on the pumpkin. Tape the pumpkins to the green construction paper base. You may wish to light a small tealight in a glass votive and place it on the mat as well.

For the month of November make a placemat out of brown or orange construction paper. A small tealight in a glass votive is suggested. Fill a small basket or bowl with unpopped popcorn kernels. Each day each family member is invited to place popcorn kernels on a tray or a cornucopia or other bowl for those things for which they are thankful that day. On Thanksgiving Eve pop the popcorn and enjoy the treat as a family.

You may wish to use this brief devotion each evening or morning - whenever your family is usually together. Taken from *The Book of Common Prayer* "At the Close of Day" pg. 140

At the Close of Day

Light the candle if you are using it.

Pray together Psalm 134:

Behold now; bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, you that stand by night in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in the holy place and bless the Lord; the Lord who made heaven and earth bless you out of Zion.

A Reading

Lord, you are in the midst of us and we are called by your Name: do not forsake us, O Lord our God. Jeremiah 14:9,22

The following may be said:

Lord, you now have set your servant free
to go in peace as you have promised;
For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior,
whom you have prepared for all the world to
see;

A Light to enlighten the nations,

and the glory of your people Israel.

Prayers for ourselves and others may follow. It is appropriate that prayers of thanksgiving for the blessings of the day and penitence for our sins to be included.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those

who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Collect

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless us and keep us. *Amen.*

Activities for home

For week of October 12:

Bible Story: Noah's Ark (Gen. 6:14-7:12)

Children's Story: *What Was I Scared Of?* Dr. Seuss

You may wish to use the hurricane poem on page 2 of this curriculum.

Read one or both stories if possible and have the following discussion:

- Talk with your children about things that scare them. What do you do to help you not be afraid?
- I wonder how it must have felt to be in that ark?
- I wonder how Noah felt when the dove returned?
- I wonder how Noah felt when the dove did not return?
- I wonder how the animals felt when they got off the ark?
- I wonder if you have ever felt in danger?

For the week of October 19:

Bible Story: Psalm 23 and Luke 15: 3-7

Children's Story: *Mama, Do You Love Me*, Barbara Joesse

Children may have made puppets of the Good Shepherd and the sheep. Encourage them to tell the story using those figures. Remind them that you and their teachers also keep them safe. Encourage them to place their sheep in a safe place.

The children's book is similar to *The Runaway Bunny* or *Papa Do You Love Me*. Help your child think of some examples like those in the story and you give the response like the mother/mother bunny/father gave.

- Talk about places of danger where you have been.
- I wonder if the sheep have names?
- I wonder if you have ever heard the Good Shepherd call your name?

For the week of October 26

Bible Story: Matthew 25: 34-41

Children's Story: *The Rag Coat*, Lauren Mills

The children made small quilt squares using fabric glued onto a handkerchief. You may wish to make another such square using fabric from home, clothes that were damaged in the storm or other bits of fabric you may have. Tell stories about each of the squares. (I used to wear this shirt when I played baseball, etc.) You may wish to make a "quilt" out of colored construction paper or newspapers or magazines or photographs of your family and the hurricane. It is important to talk about each item, telling its story. These are your family stories - who you are.

- Can you weave your story into the stories of Noah, the Good Shepherd, the Bible story for this week?
- Read the Gospel story and then find articles or pictures in newspapers or magazines to illustrate the story.
- Has someone ever given you clothes or food or a place to stay ?
- How did you feel about that?
- Or, did no one help you? How did you feel about that?
- How are you doing right now?

For the week of November 2

Bible Story: Matthew 5: 1-12, Ecclesiasticus 44: 1-10, 13-14, Revelation 7:2-4; 9-17

Children's Story: *The Relatives Came*, Cynthia Rylant

This week we celebrate All Saints and All Souls Days. In the church year, these are two very important holidays.

Children learned about some saints in the hymn "I Sing a Song of the Saints of God."

- Talk about saints that you know.
- Who are saints?
- Can we be saints?

You may wish to take small mirrors and glue them onto fun foam or construction paper. Using a marker write "Name" is a saint of God and put one for each family in a prominent place - refrigerator, etc.

Older children may have made collages of famous people (the reading from Ecclesiasticus). Talk about these people.

Change your center for family devotions today using the popcorn kernels, etc. as described earlier in this material.

Activities for home

For Week of November 9:

Bible Story: John 6: 5-14

Children's Story: *Stone Soup*, Marcia Brown

The children may have received recipe cards to bring home for you to write a couple of your favorite "comfort food" recipes. These cards will be brought back and photocopied for all who would like copies.

- I wonder how it felt to hear Jesus teach?
- I wonder how the people felt when supper time came and there was no food?
- I wonder if it was hard for the little boy to share his lunch?
- Has your neighborhood ever brought food to share Does this remind you of the story of *Stone Soup*?
- Was it more fun to eat as a group than alone?
- Did you eat something new?
- How does this story remind you of Jesus' saying to his disciples that when they fed someone, etc. they were doing it to Jesus?
- How can we stay mindful of the needs of others ?
- What if the little boy had not shared his lunch?

For the Week of November 16:

Bible Story: Luke 10: 23-37

Children's Story: *Rainbow Fish*, Marcus Pfister

The Bible story today is the Good Samaritan story. Children may have made figures with which to tell the story. Encourage them to do so with you.

- Sharing is a key theme in this week's lesson.
- How can we share with others?
- How did the rainbow fish feel when he wasn't sharing his beautiful shiny scales?
- How did he feel once he did begin sharing?
- How did the other fish feel?
- Was the rainbow fish any less beautiful? Or more?

Remember about the popcorn kernels in your home devotions. Sharing is one of the nicest things we can do for each other.

For the Week of November 23:

Bible Story: Matthew 26:25-34

Children's Story: *The Table Where Rich People Sit*, Byrd Baylor

The Bible story this week is "consider the lilies".

We have certainly had a lot to worry about lately - the hurricane, the economy, etc. Children pick up on these worries too and have some of their own as well.

In the story *The Table...* the little girl is very concerned because, obviously to her, her parents do not care that they don't have much money. The story is a wonderful story about really seeing what you have and appreciating it.

We nearly to Thanksgiving. Draw a table with your family around it and write on the table things for which you are thankful. It was suggested in the curriculum that families bring an object that represents that for which they are thankful to church or to school this week - the idea is to present yourself, your soul and body to the Lord in thanksgiving for all we have received.



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