



Community of Christ



COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LESSONS

CHILDREN

5 MARCH 2017—16 APRIL 2017

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LESSONS



Lifelong Disciple Formation in Community of Christ is the shaping of persons in the likeness of Christ at all stages of life. It begins with our response to the grace of God in loving community and continues as we help others learn, grow, and serve in the mission of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, discipleship is expressed as one lives the Mission Initiatives of the church through service, generosity, witness, and invitation.

We invite you to use these lessons for your class, group, or congregation.

Lectionary-based: The weekly lessons connect the *Revised Common Lectionary* for worship with Community of Christ identity, mission, message, and beliefs.

Quick, easy: The lessons are designed for approximately 45-minute class sessions with two to three pages of ideas, discussion starters, and activities. Additional preparation help may be found in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament* (with focus on the gospel according to Matthew).

Lessons are available for three age groups. Recognizing each age group represents multiple stages of development, the instructor is encouraged to adapt lessons to best meet the needs of the class or group. When possible, optional activities are provided to help adapt lessons for diverse settings.

Children (multiage, 6–11): Help children engage in the Bible and introduce mission and beliefs with stories, crafts, and activities.

Youth (ages 12–18): Engage teens in scripture study and provocative questions about identity, mission, and beliefs.

Adult (ages 19 and older): Deepen faith and understanding with reflective questions, theological understanding, and discussion ideas.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all Bible scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) Bible, copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

LESSON 15
5 March 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 4:1–11

Lesson Focus: Like Jesus in the desert, we face tests and temptations in our lives.

Objectives

The learners will...

- read about and discuss Jesus' temptations (tests) in the desert.
- discuss Lent and create a weekly calendar of giving and making commitments.
- attempt "impossible" activities.
- experience the spiritual practice of Body Prayer.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- *Community of Christ Sings*
- Copies of test and pencils or pens (Adjust test provided at end of lesson to meet the needs of your students or create your own.)
- Copies of Lenten calendar

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Matthew 4:1–11 in *Sermon and Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 45–46, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and invite them to sit in a circle. Sing together "I've Got the Joy." Have children share a joy they experienced this week.

Ask the children to tell about a time when they had to take a test.

- Where were you? (school, home, or relationships)
- How did you feel when you found out about the test? (nervous, excited, worried, angry, or confused)

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Say: The good news today is that we are going to take a test. Are you ready? After I pass out your test, you will have two minutes to answer all of the questions. You may not ask your neighbor for help. You are on your own.

Pass out the test and begin. Some children may finish easily. Others may struggle to answer even one question. After two minutes are over, ask children to stop.

Ask:

- What part was easy?
- What about this test was difficult?

Explain that the class now has two more minutes to work on their test. This time they may work together to figure out the answers. At the end of two minutes, have them stop.

- Which was easier—taking the test alone or working together?

Say: Today's scripture passage is about a time when Jesus was all alone in the desert for 40 days and nights. While he was there he had to face three different tests. Listen carefully for what those three tests were and how Jesus faced them.

Read together Matthew 4:1–11. What were the three tests Jesus had to pass?

1. Choosing not to be selfish (taking care of his own needs before the needs of others)
2. Choosing not to show off (using his powers for attention)

3. Choosing not to be the king of the world in order to get wealth

Ask: Do you ever have to face the same kinds of tests that Jesus did? Discuss times when children were tempted to be selfish, show off, or put money and power ahead of others.

How was Jesus able to resist temptation and pass his tests? (He relied on God and trusted God to give him strength.) One way we can resist temptation is to remember God's promises to us found in scripture. One such scripture is found in Psalm 32:10: "...love surrounds those who trust in the Lord."

Practice chanting this scripture together several times. Vary the volume and speed each time. Continue until class has memorized the scripture.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of total lesson time)

Ask the children if they would like to try some impossible tasks. Depending on time and the age of your group, explore one or more of the following tasks.

- Hum a favorite song. Now pinch your nose and cover your mouth. Try again. Can you do it?
- Sit straight up in a chair, feet flat on the floor, with arms folded across your chest. Try standing up without leaning forward. Can you do it?
- Hold your right hand out in front of you, with your elbow bent slightly. Turn your hand clockwise. Now hold your right foot off the floor and rotate it clockwise. Easy? Now reverse the direction of your hand only, not your foot. Can you do it?

These things may be impossible, but resisting temptation is not. God is with you. Repeat your verse from Psalm 32:10. "...love surrounds those who trust in the Lord."

—Adapted from *Power and Light Kids' Edition*:
January, February, March, April 2005,
p. 17 ©Community of Christ

Say: For the next six weeks, we will be talking about a period of time in the church calendar called Lent. Lent is the six weeks before Easter when Jesus is resurrected from the dead. Each week during Lent, we will do a special activity called a spiritual practice. These practices will help us become closer to God and understand more about how God wants us to live our lives.

Today's spiritual practice is called Body Prayer. We encounter God through our senses and movements. This type of prayer also honors God with our bodies as vehicles of prayer, praise, and worship.

Experiment with prayer postures as you pray. Model some of these positions for children and invite them to try one as they pray:

- Seated with hands open and receptive in lap, facing straight ahead
- Standing with hands open and in front of the body at waist level
- Standing with hands open and held wide apart at about shoulder level
- Standing with hands open and raised overhead, face tilted toward ceiling/sky
- Kneeling with head bowed
- Kneeling with hands/head in one of the positions described above
- Lying on your back (on your bed, the floor, the grass)
- Lying face down with hands outstretched

Begin and end your prayer with a sacred gesture that has meaning for you. Some examples are:

- Bowing to God with palms together or open in receptive stance
- Embracing the One: create a circle with your arms, fingers pointing together but not touching (hold for 30 seconds) represents caring for all beings and life as sacred.
- Empty cup: hands cupped in front of you as a vessel or cup that needs filling (hold 30–60 seconds) represents awareness of emptiness and the need for God's Spirit to fill us.

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Say: Sometimes during the six weeks of Lent, people choose something to give up and, instead, focus on their relationship with God. Some people give up a certain type of food or drink, watching television, or playing video games. Each person chooses something important to them. Others choose to spend the time of Lent making a commitment to do good deeds or explore their generosity by giving of their time, talent, and treasure to others.

- What are some ways we can give to others?
- Who needs a kind word or good deed from you?

Pass out Lenten calendars and help children fill in the dates of each week of Lent.

Say: This calendar will help us keep track of some of the good deeds we do for others during Lent. Take this calendar home with you today. This week write down the good deeds you do for others. Bring it back next week so we can share our good news with each other. (Or keep calendars in the classroom and have children share and complete them in class next week.)

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise,
blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Gather in a circle and have each child share something they can do this week for someone else.

End your time together by reminding the class that God loves them and is always with them, even in times of temptation.

Have the children chant Psalm 32:10 three times, a little louder each time. "...love surrounds those who trust in the Lord."

TEST

Fact or Opinion?

_____ Monday is the best day of the week.

_____ Christmas is in December.

_____ Pine trees are conifers.

_____ $1035 - 372 =$ _____ is a difficult problem to solve.

_____ Igneous rock is formed from cooling lava.

Solve the following:

$$372 \times 478 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$x + 117 = 436 \quad x = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$7\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{2} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Synonyms, Antonyms, or Neither?

_____ Agree, disagree

_____ smile, frown

_____ rainbow, snowman

_____ quiet, peaceful

_____ cold, frigid

_____ bottom, top

_____ tight, loose

_____ book, plate

_____ paper clip, rubber band

_____ music, noise

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

LESSON 16
12 March 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: John 3:1–17

Lesson Focus: Disciples are reborn in both water and Spirit.

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss what it means to be reborn in water and Spirit.
- explore ways to illustrate characteristics of the Holy Spirit.
- engage in the spiritual practice Let the Spirit Breathe.
- share experiences from their Lenten calendar.
- Fan (electric or hand-powered), paper streamers (optional), small objects that move easily when blown by air (pieces of paper, feathers, small pieces of cloth, or others as available)
- Doctrine and Covenants
- Optional: sticks or dowel rods around 12 in/30 cm long, paper streamers 12 in/30 cm long, push pins or scotch tape

Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings*
- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- Extra Lenten calendars (see lesson 15)
- Pens or pencils

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for John 3:1–17, in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, p. 47, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and have them form a circle. Ask children to share from their Lenten calendars how they used their gifts with others this week.

Invite the Holy Spirit to be present in your class by singing together “Come, Holy Spirit, Come” CCS 154.

Ask children to share about a time when someone told them how to do something but they did not understand how to do it.

- How did they feel?
- What did they do to figure it out?

Say: Today’s scripture passage is about a man named Nicodemus who was confused about what Jesus said he should do. Listen carefully for what Jesus told him.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Read together John 3:1–17. Ask the class:

- What did Nicodemus want to know? (how to be “reborn”)
- Did Jesus mean that Nicodemus had to become a baby again? (no)
- What did Jesus say Nicodemus needed to do? (be born “of water and Spirit”)
- What do you think Jesus meant by that?

Say: In Community of Christ, people commit to being disciples of Jesus through baptism and confirmation. Baptism happens in the water. It represents leaving behind your old life and being “reborn” into a new way of living—the way of Jesus. Confirmation happens after baptism. Elders in the church lay their hands on the head of the person and

ask God to bless the new disciple with the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is a way to be “reborn” of the Holy Spirit.

Note to teacher: This would be an ideal time to go deeper with your class about the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, especially if there are children in your class around the age of eight. An excellent resource is *Of Water and Spirit*, ISBN 9780830915699, available through Herald House. This pre-baptismal resource is designed to help children learn more about the sacraments of baptism and confirmation and Community of Christ beliefs. If there are children in your class ready to explore baptism, talk with your pastor or Christian education director about setting up a class.

Ask: Have you ever seen the Holy Spirit? In today’s scripture passage, Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as an invisible wind that you cannot see, but whose effects you can see.

Draw the students’ attention to the fan (electric or hand-held). Use the fan to blow small objects around on the table (see supply list for suggestions). If using an electric fan, place streamers on the outside cage of the fan. Observe how the wind moves them.

Ask:

- What is causing things to blow? (the fan)
- Can anyone see the air or wind created by the fan? (No) God’s Spirit is much the same. We see the actions of the air, and we see the actions of the Holy Spirit in the deeds of others.
- What does it look like when people respond to the Holy Spirit? How do they act?
- What do you do to show others the Holy Spirit? Take a few minutes to role play what that might look like.
- Allow children to experiment with blowing the objects around using only their own air. Clean up as needed.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of total lesson time)

Read together Doctrine and Covenants 162:2e.

- What does it mean to “let the Spirit breathe”?
- What do you have to do to hear someone breathe? (be quiet, listen carefully, give them room)

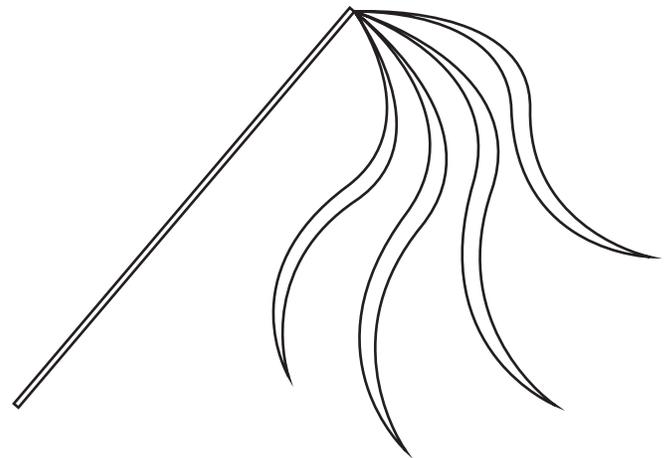
It is the same with the Holy Spirit. We need to take time to listen quietly. This happens when we pray and meditate.

Each week during the six weeks of Lent we are exploring ways to connect with God. These are called spiritual practices. Today’s practice is called Let the Spirit Breathe.

Invite the students to lie down in a comfortable position. You may want to dim the lights. Take them through a breathing exercise. Have them slowly breathe in, focusing on watching their stomachs rise. Then have them slowly breathe out, blowing the air quietly out through their lips. Repeat the breathing in and out several times. Remind the class they can do this exercise any time they want to feel close to God and the Holy Spirit.

While still lying down, ask the children to quietly share aloud whatever thoughts, ideas, or feelings they had about the Holy Spirit while they were breathing.

Optional Activity: Have the class create Spirit streamers. Pass out a stick (dowel rod) to each child. Have them cut or tear pieces of streamers and tape or pin one end of each streamer to the top of their sticks. Then have children shake or move the stick to represent the movement of the Holy Spirit.



4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Ask students to take out their Lenten calendars (see lesson 15 for more details). Have a few extras available for any students who weren’t there last week. Discuss ways the children can show the Holy Spirit to others throughout this week. Have them share ideas to add to their calendars

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Form a circle and sing together “Spirit of the Living God” CCS 567 two times. Hold hands, crouch low to the ground, and slowly rise together as you chant “Let the Spirit breathe.” End with arms in the air.

Note: Numerous ideas taken and adapted from *Power and Light Kids’ Edition*: January, February, March, April 2005 © Community of Christ.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

LESSON 17
19 March 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: John 4:5–42

Lesson Focus: Partaking of the “living water” that Jesus gives encourages us to share our joy with others.

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss what it means to partake of living water.
- explore characteristics of water.
- engage in the spiritual practice Popcorn Prayer of Good News.
- memorize a Bible verse.
- share experiences from their Lenten calendar.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- Chalkboard and chalk OR chart paper and markers
- Drawing paper and crayons or markers OR construction paper, scissors, and glue
- Optional: glass jar or large drinking glass, vinegar, baking soda, measuring cup, measuring spoon
- Optional: glass of water and drinking straw
- Extra Lenten calendars (see lesson 15)
- Pens or pencils

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for John 4:5–42 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 48–49, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and have them form a circle. Ask children to share from their Lenten calendars the ways they used their gifts with others this week. Offer a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the blessings of today.

Ask children to share about a time when they felt thirsty.

- Where were they?
- What were they doing?
- What did they do to quench their thirst?
- Is there more than one way to be thirsty?

Say: Today’s scripture passage is about a woman who met Jesus by a well when she was getting water. She discovered that Jesus offered her a different kind of water—living water.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Ask the children to listen for two types of water mentioned in the scripture passage as you read John 4:5–42 together.

- What were the two types of water mentioned in the scripture? (well water and living water)

Make two columns on a chalkboard or large piece of paper. Label the first column “Well Water” and the second column “Living Water.” Discuss the characteristics of both types of water and list them in the appropriate column.

Ask if any of the kids have seen a lake on a day when the wind was calm and the water was still. What did it look like? Have the students close their eyes and imagine a still lake. Ask them to picture what it might look like underneath the water. With their eyes still closed, ask the students to share what they are seeing. Possible answers might include algae,

fish, turtles, and moving water. Ask the children to focus on the movement underneath the water.

Gather at the table and create a picture of the lake using paper and crayons, markers, or a variety of colored paper. Remind the children to show in their picture both the still water on top and the activity underneath.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of total lesson time)

(Prior to class pour about 1/3 cup of vinegar into a jar or large drinking glass.) Retell the story of the Samaritan woman going to the well to get water, part of her usual, daily routine. Her life was not exciting, just like the “plain water” in the jar. However, when she met Jesus, he told her about “living water,” and she began to bubble over with joy. Add one tablespoon of baking soda and watch the bubbles form. Her life changed because of the joy she felt.

Ask:

- Have you ever felt as if you were bubbling over with joy? When? What happened?
- Can you think of how Jesus may have been part of the joy you felt?

Note: If vinegar and baking soda are not available, blow through a straw into a glass or jar of water. This will create bubbles in the water.

—Adapted from *Power and Light Kids' Edition*:
January, February, March, April 2005,
p. 21 © Community of Christ

Teach the children the song “Bubblin’ Over.” Depending on the age of your class, you may sing only the melody (or top) line. If your class has a number of older students, then teach both parts, beginning with “Bu-bu-bu-bubblin’, Bu-bu-bu-bubblin’,” and then adding “Jesus’ love is bubblin’ over. Jesus’ love is in my soul” (*Songs for Camps and Reunions*, © Herald Publishing House, p. 9).

Have class create hand and body motions to go with each section.

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Have students take out their Lenten calendars (see lesson 15 for details). Discuss ways the children can show the bubbling joy of living water to others over the next week. Have each one share at least one idea to add to their calendar.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Gather in a circle and finish your time together with the spiritual practice of Popcorn Prayer of Good News. Invite children to “bubble over” with joy and randomly take turns shouting out the good news they will share with others this week. Examples might include that Jesus loves them, everyone is welcome, Jesus gave them living water, or they have love and joy in their lives.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

LESSON 18
26 March 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: John 9:1–41

Lesson Focus: Sometimes disciples are spiritually blind and fail to share their faith with others.

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss the difference between physical blindness and spiritual blindness.
- experience what physical blindness might feel like.
- act out a skit about how to share a testimony.

- engage in the spiritual practice of *Lectio Divina*.
- share experiences from their Lenten calendar.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- Extra Lenten calendars (see lesson 15)
- Pens or pencils

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for John 9:1–41 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, p. 50, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge,
prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and have them form a circle. Ask children to share from their Lenten calendars how they used their gifts with others since the last class session.

Ask the children if they know anyone who is blind. What difficulties might a blind person have? (Examples might include bumping into objects; needing a cane or seeing-eye dog, special street-crossing signals that make sounds, and Braille writing.)

Today’s scripture passage is about a man who was born blind. When the blind man meets Jesus, his life changes.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration
and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Read together John 9:1–41.

Note: Due to the length of the scripture, you may find it more appropriate to read this adapted version.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. Jesus spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smoothed the mud over the blind man’s eyes. Jesus said, “Go wash in the pool of Siloam.” So the man went and washed. And came back seeing! The neighbors asked, “Aren’t you the blind man who used to sit here and beg? Who opened your eyes?” The man said, “The man called Jesus.”

They brought him to the Pharisees and when they asked who healed him, he said, “A prophet. What I know is that I was blind, and now I see!” They sent him out of the city, but when Jesus talked to him, he said, “Lord, I believe you are the Son of God.” Jesus said, “I have come to give sight to the blind.”

Say: In our scripture passage today, there are two kinds of blindness. One is easy to understand—physical blindness (a person’s eyes don’t allow him or her to see properly). The second kind is more difficult—spiritual blindness (not being able to see God at work).

Let’s try an experiment. Close your eyes. Now tell me how many fingers I am holding up (put up three fingers). Why is it impossible to know? (because you are “physically blind”)

Now open your eyes and tell how many fingers I am holding up. (Hold up three fingers again.) This time you were all

correct! What was different this time that made it easier? This time our eyes were open, and the light in the room helped us see.

When we allow Jesus to shine his light into our lives, we are no longer “spiritually blind.” We are able to see what is hiding inside us that makes us hesitant to share Jesus’ love with others.

- What makes you feel uneasy or afraid?
- Why is it difficult to share about Jesus with others?

Form groups of two or three and create a skit about sharing your story of Jesus. Consider talking with someone on the school bus, confronting a bully at school or in your neighborhood, or inviting a friend or family member to a church activity. Perform the skits for the class.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of total lesson time)

Lectio Divina

This spiritual practice encourages us to read scripture carefully in order to understand God’s Word. As I read the scripture story based on John 9:1–41, close your eyes and try to be part of the scene.

- Who are the characters?
- What is the setting?
- Imagine the scene—the sights, sounds, and smells in the story.

One day, Jesus met a man who was blind from birth. Jesus said that God did not make him blind and the man did not do anything wrong that caused his blindness.

Jesus asked, “Would you like to be able to see?” The man said, “Yes! Yes! Oh yes, please!”

Jesus took some soil from the ground. He spit on it and mixed it into mud. Then he put the mud on the man’s eyes and told him to go and wash his eyes.

The man did what Jesus said, and after he washed, he jumped up and shouted and told the people, “I can see! I can see! Jesus helped me see!”

- Where do you find yourself in the story?
- Describe what you see, hear, and smell as you imagine the scene.
- How does it feel to witness what Jesus does?

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Ask students to take out their Lenten calendars (see lesson 15 for details). Have each one share and write on their calendar at least one way to show others the light of Jesus this week

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

End your time together with the chant, “Lord, we were blind, but now we see!”

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

LESSON 19
2 April 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: John 11:1–45

Lesson Focus: Jesus gives us hope.

Objectives

The learners will...

- share experiences from their Lenten calendar.
- engage in the story of Lazarus.
- share ways they can bring the hope of Jesus to others.

Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings*
- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- Extra Lenten calendars (see lesson 15)
- Pens/pencils
- Six copies of “The Miracle of Lazarus” drama (end of lesson)
- Miracle of Lazarus word search, one for each student (end of lesson)

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for John 11:1–45 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 51–52, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and have them form a circle. Sing together “Jesus’ Hands Were Kind Hands” CCS 585. Ask children to share from their Lenten calendars the ways they used their hands to help others this past week.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Say: In today’s scripture passage we meet two sisters who expect their ill brother to be healed by Jesus. However, what happens takes them by surprise.

Experience the story of John 11:1–45 by acting out the drama at the end of the lesson, “The Miracle of Lazarus.”

Note: If class is small, combine with another class or invite youth or parents to help act out the story.

After acting out the drama, discuss the story.

- If you were Mary or Martha, how would this experience make you feel? Why?
- What if you were Lazarus?
- Have you ever given up hope when something good you expected to happen never happened? Can you tell about it? How did you feel?
- Have you ever given up hope when it took a long time for something to happen? When it finally happened, how did you feel?

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

(35% of total lesson time)

Give children time to work individually on their Miracle of Lazarus word search puzzle (end of lesson). See how many words they can find; then work together until all the following words have been circled and written in the blanks.

Lazarus, Bethany, Son, sick, Mary, Martha, Jesus, died, tomb, four, brother, believe, wept, alive, miracle

Read the scripture story review to the children (or provide them with a copy). Fill in the missing words using the words found in their word search puzzle.

Mary, Martha, and _____ lived in _____. They were friends of Jesus who believed he was the _____ of God. Lazarus became very _____. _____ and _____ sent for _____ to come. But Jesus did not come in time and Lazarus _____. They placed his body in a _____. When Jesus arrived Lazarus had been dead for _____ days. Mary and Martha asked, "Why did you not come sooner? Our _____ is dead." Jesus asked Mary and Martha, "Do you _____?" Jesus _____. Jesus told Lazarus to come out of the tomb. Lazarus was _____! What a wonderful _____!

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Have students take out their Lenten calendars (see lesson 15). Have each one share at least one idea of how to show others the hope of Jesus this week.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Close your time by saying together, "Have hope in the Lord! The Lord's love lasts forever" (Psalm 130:7, adapted) several times. Vary how loudly and softly you say it. End on a whisper and say, "Amen."

THE MIRACLE OF LAZARUS

Characters: Narrator, Lazarus, Mary, Martha, Messenger, Jesus, disciples

Narrator: Do you remember Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus? They were close friends of Jesus—close enough to believe that Jesus would come when he heard they needed him.

Lazarus: *(turns to sisters, places hand to his forehead)* Mary and Martha, I don't feel so well.

Mary: *(feels his head)* You are a bit feverish. Maybe you should lie down and rest.

Martha: *(leads Lazarus to "bed" to lie down)* Here, you lie down. Get some sleep. I'm sure you will feel better tomorrow.

Narrator: The next morning when the ladies checked on their brother, he was feeling worse—much worse.

Martha: *(brings Lazarus a drink)* Here, Lazarus. You need to drink something.

Mary: *(leans over Lazarus to comfort him)* Would you like us to send for Jesus? You know he will come to help you!

Narrator: Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived in the town of Bethany. Jesus was in another town teaching and healing, so Mary wrote a note and sent someone to take it to Jesus.

(Mary gives the messenger a note that says, "Our brother, your good friend Lazarus, is sick. Please come." Messenger runs out the door with note and back into the room to another area where Jesus and some of his disciples are sitting.)

Messenger: Jesus, this note is for you. It was sent to you by your friends Mary and Martha.

Jesus: *(reads the note aloud, then turns to messenger)* The illness Lazarus has is not fatal. Tell Mary and Martha I will come when I can.

Narrator: The messenger returned to Bethany with his message to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

(Messenger leaves room and comes back in where Mary and Martha are standing.)

Narrator: Disappointed, even confused, Mary and Martha continued to care for their brother the best way they knew how. But Lazarus' illness was fatal, and soon he died. Saddened, they wrapped his body and placed him in a simple cave in the hillside with a stone laid against the entrance.

(Mary and Martha loosely wrap strips of paper or cloth around the upper part of Lazarus' body and lay him down.)

After two days Jesus told the disciples it was time to go to Lazarus. By the time Jesus reached his friends, Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. Many friends were at the house to console the sisters. When word came that Jesus was coming, Martha went to the edge of town to meet him.

Martha: Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him (John 11:21–22).

Jesus: Your brother will be raised up. Go get Mary.

Narrator: Martha brought Mary to Jesus. Many of the visiting friends also followed.

Mary: *(weeping)* Why didn't you come? You could have kept him from dying.

Jesus: Show me his tomb. *(Mary and Martha lead everyone to the tomb)*

Narrator: Jesus was deeply moved and began to weep with them. He asked them to remove the stone.

Martha: The body has been in the tomb for four days; there is already the smell of death.

Jesus: Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God? *(Jesus looks toward the heavens)* Father, thank you for hearing me. *(turns toward tomb)* Lazarus, come out!

Narrator: Lazarus stood and walked out of the tomb, still wrapped in strips of cloth. Mary and Martha carefully unwrapped their brother, believing even more that Jesus was their Lord and Savior. Everyone who saw knew that they had truly witnessed a miracle.

MIRACLE OF LAZARUS WORD SEARCH

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

1. _____ (Lazarus)
2. _____ (Bethany)
3. _____ (Son)
4. _____ (sick)
5. _____ (Mary)
6. _____ (Martha)
7. _____ (Jesus)
8. _____ (died)
9. _____ (tomb)
10. _____ (four)
11. _____ (brother)
12. _____ (believe)
13. _____ (wept)
14. _____ (alive)
15. _____ (miracle)

PALM SUNDAY

LESSON 20
9 April 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 21:1–11/21:1–9 IV

Lesson Focus: Hosanna to the Son of David!

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss the events of Palm Sunday.
- journey through Holy Week.
- share experiences from their Lenten calendar.

Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings*
- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- Extra Lenten calendars (see lesson 15)
- Large sheet of blank paper
- Crayons
- Pens/pencils
- Holy Week handout

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 21:1–11 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 53–54, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and have them form a circle. Ask children to share from their Lenten calendars the ways they used their gifts with others this week.

Sing together “Takwaba Uwabanga Yesu! (There’s No One Like Jesus!)” CCS 121. One of Community of Christ’s Enduring Principles is Worth of All Persons. Remind the children that Jesus’ teachings, sacrifice, and love are for everyone, not just for people who look, talk, or think just as we do.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Place blank paper over the top of the table. As you tell the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, invite the

children to use crayons to draw palm leaves all over the paper. Draw an example first in case they don’t know what a palm frond looks like.

Say: Today is Palm Sunday. This is the week we remember Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples had been traveling outside Jerusalem, sharing the gospel message with others. To return to Jerusalem was risky because there were people there who thought Jesus was a threat and should be killed. But Jesus knew it was time to return to Jerusalem to share in the Passover meal. Share the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem adapted from Matthew 21:1–11 NRSV.

When they [Jesus and the disciples] neared Jerusalem and reached Bethphage at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples into the village with these instructions: “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them with you.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, put their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name
of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Say: Put yourself in this story and imagine that you are one of the disciples.

- How would you feel when Jesus told you it was time to go back to Jerusalem? Why?
- Jesus just asked you to go into town to take a donkey and her colt. How do you feel? Why do you do what Jesus asked?

Imagine you are someone in the crowd watching as Jesus enters Jerusalem on the back of a donkey.

- How do you respond if you have never met or even heard of Jesus?
- What do you do if you are a believer? How are you feeling? What do you want others to know about Jesus?

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of total lesson time)

There were many important events following Jesus' entry into Jerusalem that led to his crucifixion and then his resurrection. We call the week between Palm Sunday and Easter Holy Week. This week is a time to remember Jesus' final journey to the cross and his resurrection.

Give each child a copy of the Holy Week Journey handout (end of lesson) with windows cut and a blank piece of paper taped to the back. Depending on the size and age of the class, work individually, in small groups, or as a whole class together. Look up each scripture reference; then open the window and in the blank window draw a picture or write a word that represents the scripture. **NOTE:** Some of the scripture references are quite long and due to time may need to be summarized by the teacher.

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Have students take out their Lenten calendars (see lesson 15). Have each one share at least one idea of how to show others the hope of Jesus this week.

Discuss ways they can share the Holy Week Journey with their families this week.

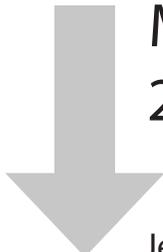
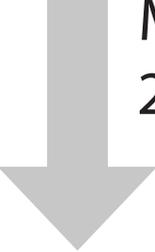
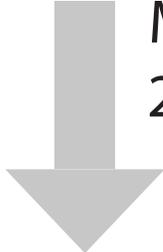
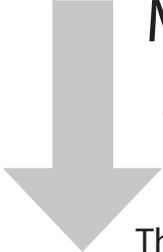
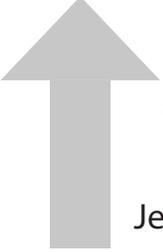
5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Sing together the camp song "Allelu, Alleluia, Praise Ye the Lord." Sit while singing "Allelu, alleluia," and stand with hands raised high while singing "Praise ye the Lord." Or sing "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah" CCS 86.

Journey of Holy Week: Matthew 21–28

Cut dotted lines only. Tape blank paper behind. Fold on solid lines to create windows.

 <p>Matthew 21:1–11</p> <p>Jesus' entry into Jerusalem</p>	 <p>Matthew 27:1–2, 17–31</p> <p>The trial of Jesus</p>	 <p>Matthew 27:32–56</p> <p>Jesus' crucifixion and death</p>
 <p>Matthew 21:12–17</p> <p>Jesus cleanses the temple</p>	 <p>Matthew 26:47–68</p> <p>Betrayal and arrest of Jesus</p>	 <p>Matthew 27:57–66</p> <p>Jesus' body moved to tomb</p>
 <p>Matthew 21:23–25</p> <p>Jesus teaches</p>	 <p>Matthew 26:36–45</p> <p>Jesus prays in Gethsemane</p>	 <p>Matthew 28:1–20</p> <p>The Resurrection of Jesus</p>
 <p>Matthew 26:1–5, 14–16</p> <p>Plot to kill Jesus</p>	 <p>Matthew 26:17–35</p> <p>Jesus' Last Supper with disciples</p>	<p>Halleluia! Jesus is alive!</p>

EASTER SUNDAY

LESSON 21
16 April 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 28:1–10/28:1–9 IV, John 20:1–18

Lesson Focus: Jesus is alive!

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss the events surrounding Jesus' resurrection as shared in the Gospel of Matthew.
- review the journey through Holy Week.
- celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

Supplies

- *Community of Christ Sings*
- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- Optional: *Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*, by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2007, ISBN 9781551455471)
- Lesson 21 handout (optional: shrink art material)
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Matthew 28:1–10 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 62–63, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Greet children as they enter and have them form a circle. Ask children to tell how they shared Holy Week with the family. Review the events of Holy Week, especially the Crucifixion and burial in the tomb. Explain that today is the day we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus just three days later. Today we celebrate that Jesus is alive!

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Share the Resurrection story with the children. Read John 20:1–18 and summarize the story for the children. Older children can read it and summarize the story themselves.

Or read the Resurrection story from the *Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*, by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2007, ISBN 9781551455471), pp. 98–99.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

(35% of total lesson time)

Give each person a handout to color. While working, talk about ways the children can share the story of Jesus with their friends.

Alternate: Print or trace handout onto shrink art material, one for each person (available at craft stores and online). Provide permanent markers or colored pencils to color the design. Before baking, punch two holes in the top corners of the picture so it can be hung with a ribbon or string.

Bake pictures in the oven according to package directions. Final pictures will be half the size of the original and much stiffer.

Sonrise—God's gift to all.
Jesus is alive!
Darkness is followed by light.
The tomb is empty. Celebrate!

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived
(10% of total lesson time)

Provide several plastic eggs for each child. Give them slips of paper on which to write messages of hope. After messages are written, place one in each egg. Challenge children to share the story of hope by sharing their eggs with individuals in the congregation.

Here are a few to get started:

Be changed. Be the change!
Jesus lives today.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Sing together the camp song "Allelu, Alleluia, Praise Ye the Lord." Sit while singing "Allelu, alleluia," and stand with hands raised high while singing "Praise ye the Lord". If you are not familiar with the song, look it up online to learn this simple tune. Or sing "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah" CCS 86.

Close with a prayer giving thanks for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

