SUNDAY SCHOOL
CURRICULUM
AND
LESSON PLANS

Johannesburg Diocese
Children's Ministry

TERM 1
2014
INTRODUCTION

To all Sunday School Teachers

Sunday School is a vital component of any church. Our children are the future of the church, and as you are probably aware, many schools no longer have any form of religious education, and so apart from their parents, we are their primary Christian educators.

As Sunday school teachers we are very much aware of the need for a structured, theologically sound, Anglican curriculum that meets our needs and provides guidance and direction to our teachers. This need is even greater in less privileged, under resourced parishes. There is also a critical need for teaching materials in languages other than English.

Consequently, it is hoped that these resources will do the following:

- Provide a structured programme for teachers with easy to follow lessons.
- Address the spiritual needs of our Sunday school children.

The syllabus that has been prepared tries, as closely as possible, to follow the lectionary which after a 3 year cycle, covers all the stories that are paramount to the Christian faith.

A basic lesson plan and ideas for crafts, songs, physical activities, puzzles, pictures etc have been suggested for each week of the school term. You are, however, encouraged to develop your own lesson - explore other resources and the internet, if possible, and prepare a lesson that you are comfortable with.

These resources are not intended to remain stagnant, but to move with the times. We would be happy to receive your feedback and comments, so please share your ideas with us, either at a future conference or on the Anglican Diocese website: http://www.anglicanjoburg.org.za/sundayschool/TeacherTrainingChildrensMinistry/Resources.aspx

Please also contact us should you like to contribute ideas or write for future lessons.

The Anglican Diocese of Johannesburg offers excellent training should you need advice in preparing and facilitating a lesson. Once again, refer to the website mentioned above should you like to know more.

We wish you a lot of fun as you prepare your lessons, and through this ministry may you also grow in your faith and find great fulfilment. Most of all, may your children have fun as they learn about their faith!

God Bless you all!

Diocese of Johannesburg Children’s Ministry
About this Curriculum

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The last few lessons of each year are devoted to Advent and Christmas.
How to prepare for a lesson

Pray for yourself, the children in your group and the lesson message.

Read the Bible to learn and understand the story and the spiritual truths. Study related Bible passages and other translations of the Scriptures.

Enrich your background understanding. Read the information for the teacher found at the beginning of each of our lessons in this manual. If you are able to, look at reference books, consult an atlas etc.

Prepare. Preferably, you should be thinking about your lesson a week before you are due to give it, so that you are able to collect the materials you need over that week. Decide how you will present the material and what activities you will do. Prepare the teaching aids and anything else needed for the lesson. It is important to plan a lesson which is not too short or too long. It is good to have a few extra activities planned should the church be running late.

Here follows a basic lesson structure you can use, although not all components are necessary every lesson:

- Welcome
- Introduction to the theme and attention grabber
- Bible reading
- Prayer
- Memory verse
- Craft
- Song
- Physical activity
- Worksheet
- Snack

Aim of the lesson. Know what you wish to accomplish during the lesson.

Reach the children. Choose the best methods to convey the message to the children. Use an age appropriate Bible. Remember that children learn best by actively doing things and exploring and discovering for themselves. Try to vary your activities from week to week e.g. try artwork activities that include painting and collage to encourage creativity.

Evaluate the lesson after teaching it. Ask yourself questions such as:

- What went really well?
- What did the children enjoy?
- What will I do the same next time and what will I do differently?

(The PREPARE idea is inspired by The South African Sunday School Association)
UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

It has been aptly said that “we must ‘learn’ our children before we can ‘teach’ them”
In order to be an effective teacher, we need to know the children we teach. This means knowing a little about their families, their brothers and sisters and the circumstances in which they live. It also means having knowledge of the characteristic behaviour of children at various ages as this helps us to understand the needs of the children, and what really makes them tick.

“And Jesus grew both in body and in wisdom, gaining favour with God and people.” Luke 2:52
This scripture asserts that no one is born fully mature and complete. As humans we are in a process of growth. This maturation process can be seen in terms of physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development. Within each of these domains typical characteristics are evident for each age group.

Birth, One, Two and Three-Year-Olds
For very young children and babies it is often best if a parent or caregiver comes with them to Sunday School. Children under two years need individual attention. They are timid and emotionally sensitive and need individual care from a familiar adult.

This age group is continually active and so need opportunity and space for activity. They do not sit still for any length of time and their concentration span is no more than a couple of minutes. So keep stories short, and action packed with plenty of pictures. They love repetition and routine. This helps to make them feel secure. So for example, it is good to follow a similar format for your lessons. Start with a song, follow with prayer and so on. Stories should be short and familiar in the sense that the child can identify with the characters. So even though bible stories happened hundreds of years ago, show how they are still relevant for today and use modern scenarios.

Two and three year olds are individualistic rather than functioning as part of a group. Give individual care and provide time for free play. Craft activities can be part of free play, but so could puppets or other toys which they can use to re-enact bible stories or simply to play with. Provide them with sensory experiences such as sand and water play and paints and play dough. Encourage them to appreciate colour and beauty and especially the beauty of nature, God’s creation. Point out pretty flowers, interesting cloud formations, trees and encourage them to look around their environment and to think of ways to care for and even improve their environment. Maybe plant a garden as an activity. They are open to spiritual things and to an awareness of God.

At this age if they experience love from the adults who care for them they will learn to trust and they will have a sense of hope rather than despair and fear.

Four, Five and Six-Year-Olds
This is a time of rapid growth. These children are still extremely active as well as being inquisitive and asking countless questions. They imitate those around them and especially the five year olds have a strong desire to please. They learn best through play and this means that stories and teaching are short and free play, organised games and craft activities fill much of the Sunday school time. Alternate your programme with times of activity and times of quiet and rest. Answer questions honestly. Seek the reasons behind the questions and encourage the children to think for themselves
They are full of wonder and eager to be taught. They need routine and security but also new experiences and challenges. Be a consistent example to them as they learn acceptable behaviour from your guidance and example. By your love and care for them you will help them to experience God’s love. Stimulate their desire to worship by having short, fun times of worship using action songs. Build reverence for prayer and for church.

**Six, Seven and Eight-Year-Olds**

Their growth is now slower and they are refining their skills and improving their muscle coordination. They need to use large muscles so encourage climbing and running as far as is possible. They are starting to read and write and this opens new opportunities for teaching. Their thinking is still concrete and literal, so be careful how you explain the mysteries of faith. Avoid symbolism which is beyond their understanding. For example, if you say that Jesus sits on God’s right hand, they might wonder if that means God uses God’s left hand or that God gets pins and needles as Jesus is on God’s hand. They have a strong sense of fairness and are concerned about right and wrong. They tend to see things as black or white and struggle to understand and appreciate uncertainty and that there are shades of grey.

They have keen senses. They are eager and curious, extremely conversational, highly sensitive, friendly and have a whole hearted approach to things. It is a time when you can build their self esteem by giving them simple tasks that are easily completed. Provide objects to see and handle. Allow them to learn with active participation. Encourage and promote self expression and also working together. Be fair and encourage them to make their own rules. Help them to apply the bible to real life situations in which they have to make decisions. Most importantly help them to experience God’s love and care for them through your love and care.

**Nine, Ten, Eleven and Twelve Year-Olds**

They are very active and so lessons need to include games and various activities. They have a great interest in facts, a good memory, like recognition, and are loyal. It is a time where they are learning who they are; they often identify with heroes and will form groups or gangs. Let Sunday School be ‘The Club’ or ‘the gang’ and set Christ as their hero.

They enjoy humour. Teach what is funny and what is not. They need constructive activities that will challenge their ability. Give plenty of facts, encourage memorization of scripture, praise them when they do well. Answer questions truthfully and help them to find answers in the bible. Provide devotional help by setting an example of prayer and trust in God. Encourage the church to have family services that are inclusive of the children and where the teaching is suitable for children, so that they come to enjoy going to church. Encourage them to make a practice of daily devotions.

Remember that children develop at different rates in different areas and must always be treated as individuals. And remember that God loves each and every child and that we have a huge privilege as well as a vast responsibility as we teach them about God’s love and deepen their faith and understanding.

**References:**

“Called to Teach” Sunday School Teacher Training Manual, Anglican Church of Southern Africa, Diocese of Johannesburg, Molly Robinson, 2013

“Almost every answer for practically any teacher”, Dr Bruce Wilkinson, Multnomah Press, 1992
PRAYER

Prayer is a very central part of our relationship with God. It is therefore important that we, as teachers pray constantly as well as encourage the children to pray. “If praying is easy for us, it will be easy for our children”. However, many of us are not very confident when we have to pray and are at times unsure of how to pray.

An approach to prayer which may help you in your class is the ACTS method.
A – Adoration
C – Confession
T – Thanksgiving
S – Supplication – asking for the needs of others and our needs

Another idea is to make a Prayer Box. Children write their prayers on thick coloured card. Each prayer should have a theme. The children may decorate the cards in whatever way they wish and write on their name and age. Cover and decorate a cardboard box to hold the cards. Put the cards in alphabetical order of topic. Give the box of prayers to your minister or priest to use in family services, for example.

Spontaneous prayers are also encouraged. You should also pray whenever the need arises as there is no special formula, time or place for prayer.

## Curriculum

### Term 1 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week in Church year</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Life of Jesus</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19 January</td>
<td>Second Sunday after Epiphany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jesus, no ordinary baby!*</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26 January</td>
<td>Third Sunday after Epiphany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s go fishing- Jesus calls His disciples*</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 February</td>
<td>Fourth Sunday after Epiphany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Bee-attitudes (The Sermon on the Mount)*</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9 February</td>
<td>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We are called to be the salt and light of the world*</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16 February</td>
<td>Sixth Sunday after Epiphany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parable: The mustard seed</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>23 February</td>
<td>Seventh Sunday after Epiphany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miracle: Jesus feeds the 5 000</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Transfiguration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miracle: Jesus walks on water</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lenten Theme: God’s Reconciliation with Humankind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week in Lent</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9 March</td>
<td>First Sunday in Lent</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Garden of Eden – The serpent tempts Adam and Eve*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16 March</td>
<td>Second Sunday in Lent</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Call and Blessing of Abram*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>23 March</td>
<td>Third Sunday in Lent</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Ten Commandments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Gauteng School Term: 15 Jan – 28 March 2014
**Jesus, no ordinary Baby!**

Second Sunday after Epiphany  
Between 14 and 20 January

*Readings:* Isaiah 49: 1- 7; John 1:29-34  
*Theme:* Epiphany – The Revelation of Jesus to the world  
*Memory verses:*

- “I have seen and I testify that us this is the Son of God” John 1:34
- “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel, which means, “God with us.”
- “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon His shoulders, and He is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

**Information for the teacher:**

At the beginning of a new Sunday school year it is fitting to connect our children with what has happened over the past couple of weeks while they have been on holiday.

We celebrated Christmas, a time when we celebrate the birth of Christ and acclaim the mystery of the incarnation: Emmanuel – “God with us”. Our journey follows through to our present season - Epiphany and this is the focus of our lesson today. The word, “Epiphany” comes from the Greek “epiphaneia” meaning “appearance” or “revelation” – when Jesus as Lord was revealed to the world.

Three events are recognised as being part of the Epiphany:

1. **The Three Wise Men** who brought gifts of:  
   - gold - symbolic of kingly power  
   - frankincense - a symbol of deity i.e. a gift for a God  
   - myrrh - a spice used in the Jew’s burial rites and a symbol of the life of sorrow and suffering which was to be the destiny of the newly born Christ.

2. **The Baptism of Jesus.** ‘The Spirit of God Descended like a dove and a voice was heard saying, “This is my Son, with whom I am well pleased.”’ Matt 3: 16 -17
3. **Jesus performs His first miracle at the Wedding of Cana,** changing water into wine.

All these events indicated that Jesus was more than a human – He was God. Today’s lesson will take a closer look at the revelation of Jesus as God.

Furthermore, just as God has been revealed to us through Jesus, we are called to be a revelation of God i.e. we must tell others about Jesus, not only by what we do but by what we say.
Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:
- To learn about the visit of the Three Wise Men.
- To know that Jesus is God.
- To tell others about Jesus.

Attention Grabber:
- Let the children play with a microphone, preferably one that works. Ask what a microphone is used for? Answers should include that it makes your voice louder.
- A vuvuzela can also be used. This device makes a lot of noise!

Mention that we will be coming back to these ideas later in the lesson.

Discussion and activity:
- Ask the children about the events of Christmas. Ask them if they know the story of the Three Wise Men. Emphasise that the Three Wise Men did not arrive on the night of Jesus’ birth – they came from far away and it took them a long time to find Jesus.
- If you are able to, dress up 3 children as the Wise Men and give them each a box to carry – The first box needs to contain something that looks like gold (Chocolate coins wrapped in gold foil would work!); The second box can contain incense and the third box can contain a bottle of perfume to represent myrrh.
- Just as the Three Wise Men did, take the children for a walk where they follow a trail of stars that leads to a baby – Baby Jesus!
- Unwrap the presents that are for Baby Jesus and discuss what each gift means:
  - Gold: Jesus is King
  - Incense: Jesus is God, not just a person
  - Myrrh: Jesus will die one day for us
- Discuss that we must go into the world to tell others that Jesus is God and He is our King. This is our message and we must make a big noise about it, just like we did with the vuvuzela and the microphone.

Bible Story:
Go back to class and read the story of the Wise Men from a Children’s Bible. Matt 2:1-12
Craft ideas:

- Make a crown. Perhaps provide glitter and stickers for the children to decorate their crowns. Write on the crown: “Jesus is my King”.
- Make a “vuvuzela / microphone simply by rolling up and securing a piece of paper to form a cone – the longer the cone the better! A message such as “Jesus is my King” can be written on the “vuvuzela” and children can decorate it and then use it to make a noise, reminding them to go out to proclaim the good news about Jesus.

Snack: Make star sandwiches. Use a star-shaped cookie cutter to cut out bread which already has margarine on it. The children will love to decorate their sandwich with hundreds and thousands and then eat!

Song: Sing songs of Praise. If you have musical instruments such as drums and bells, let the children use them to make a joyful noise!

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus. We thank you that you are our King and our God. Thank you that you loved us so much that you died for us. Please help us to tell others about you. Amen.

Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To know what is meant by the Epiphany
- To know that we are called to spread the gospel

Attention Grabber:

- Let the children play with a microphone, preferably one that works. Ask what a microphone is used for? Answers should include that it magnifies your voice and makes announcements.
- A vuvuzela is also a brilliant idea. Ask them if they know what its traditional use is i.e. to summon communities to make announcements. Mention that we will be coming back to these ideas later in the lesson.

Discussion and questions:

- Discuss that throughout the year the Church has different seasons e.g. Lent, Advent. Presently, the Church is celebrating the Season of Epiphany. Explain what is meant by Epiphany and the events that are recognised as being part of the Epiphany. Explain how each of these events revealed that Jesus is Lord – He is not just another human – He is God! (Refer to the teacher information at the beginning of this lesson for details on this.)
• Ask if the children understand why we used a vuvuzela/microphone at the start of this lesson? – *The events of the Epiphany announce that Jesus is Lord – He is more than human – He is God.*

• What does “Jesus” mean? *The Lord saves*

• Can you think of other names that describe Jesus? *Messiah - saviour; Immanuel - God with us; Prince of Peace; Wonderful Counsellor; Redeemer etc*

• This is good news that we need to share with the world. Just as God was revealed to us through Jesus, we need to reveal Jesus to the world, not only by what we do, but by what we say. So go out into the world to announce that Jesus is Lord!

**Song:** Jesus, name above all names. (Words at end of lesson)

**Worksheet:** Word Search to find all the names of Jesus. Perhaps have a small prize for the person or group that finds the most words.

**Craft:** The Class can make a banner with a vuvuzela on it. Words that describe Jesus can be written on the banner. “Proclaim Jesus to the world!” can be the heading for the banner.

**Prayer:** Today, spend time on *Adoration*, acknowledging all that has been discussed in class e.g. Jesus is our saviour, wonderful counsellor etc; He is able to perform miracles etc. The song, “Jesus, name above all names” can be used in the prayer. Encourage each child to participate.

A candle can be lit as a reminder that God is with us.

*Jesus, name above all names*  
Jesus, name above all names  
Beautiful Saviour, Glorious Lord  
Emmanuel, God is with us  
Blessed Redeemer, Living Word
Word Search

Look for the following words in the grid below – these are all words used to describe Jesus:

- Redeemer
- Saviour
- Living water
- Immanuel
- Alpha
- Omega
- Bread
- God
- King
- Light
- Messiah
- Prince of Peace
- Counsellor
- Lord
- Word

The words can be written forwards, backwards, upwards, downwards and diagonally!
Let’s go fishing – Jesus calls His Disciples *

Third Sunday after Epiphany
Between 21 and 27 January

Reading:  Matt 4: 18 – 22; Mark 1:16 – 20; Luke 5:1 – 11
Theme: Being a Disciple; following Jesus
Memory verse: “Come, follow me, I will make you fishers of men” Matt 4:19

Information for the teacher:

Two sets of lessons have been suggested to address the needs of different age groups. The basic “fishers of men” lesson may be too simple for older age groups and heard too often. You may want to concentrate more on the disciples who Jesus called and what it means to be a disciple. If you are teaching a younger group you may wish to focus on the reading from Luke which describes the miraculous catch of fish which Simon Peter and his partners caught after a night of no success.

It is suggested that you read through lesson plans for both age groups this week as you may find ideas that you can use or slightly modify to suit your particular group.

Please be aware that some people may be sensitive to the wording of this scripture i.e. we are to be fishers of men - women are not mentioned. You may feel it is important to emphasize that this scripture applies to all people, not just men!
Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objective:
- To learn about the miraculous catch of fish
- To know what it means to be a fisher of men


Discussion:
- Read from a Children’s bible.
- Discuss the story of the miraculous catch of fish.

Questions:
- What does it mean to be a fisher of men?
  *It means to follow Jesus and do as He does and encourage others to follow Him too.*
- What type of behaviour would you expect from people who follow Jesus?
  *These people don’t fight; they read their bibles, they are considerate of others etc.*
- Did you know that the fish symbol has been used from the earliest days of the Christian Church to indicate that someone is a Christian? This symbol was originally used as a secret sign of believers in times of persecution.

Songs (words are at the end of this lesson):
- “I will make you fishers of men”
- “Peter and James and John in a sail boat”
  *(Make up actions to help the children remember this song; you can even bring a giant washing basket which can be used as a fishing boat for the children to play in.)*
Craft ideas:

- Children can decorate fish (template 1). Provide colouring-in materials such as kokis, crayons and glitter, tissue paper, glue etc and scissors to cut out the fish shape. The words, “follow me, I will make you fishers of men” can be added to the fish. These fish can then be stuck on a board and a “net” from a bag of oranges can be added to the picture.

- Template 2 is offered for slightly older children that they can decorate. More ideas related to this activity and an example of a completed design can be found on www.kidssundayschool.com/93/gradeschool/fun-foam-fish.php. The children can also be encouraged to come up with their own designs.

Physical activities:

- Fishing game – a fishing rod can be made by attaching a magnet to a piece of string and attaching it to a wooden stick. A staple can be added to the fish that the children have made. The fish will then be attracted to the fishing rod as it passes over them. The aim of the game can be to collect as many fish as possible.

- “Jesus says” – this is based on the game “Simon says”. The leader does an action at the same time as saying “Jesus says”. For example, if the leader says “Jesus says put your hands on your head”, the children must follow the instruction. If the words, “Jesus says” are not used, then the children must not do the action.

Snack: marshmallow fish

Prayer: Help us to become good fishers of men. Help us to be good examples by the way we act and what we say. Help us to tell others about Jesus and to invite them to church so they will know Him and follow Him. Amen
Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To know what it means to be a fisher of men
- To know about the 12 disciples

Bible Story: Matt 4: 18 -22 / Mark 1:16 -20

Discussion:

- Read from the bible.
- Discuss what it means to be a fisher of men or a disciple of Jesus.
- Discuss who the 12 disciples of Jesus were and give some information about them. (Some information is included at the end of this lesson).
- Give the children time to go through the information and then have a quiz (with prizes like sweets!). The children may like to make up their own questions for other children / groups.
- Perhaps also discuss which disciple each child relates to, or which disciple they would most like to emulate.
- Perhaps also discuss that the disciples were certainly not fallible – Jesus calls us all, even if we are not perfect!
- A different slant to this lesson would be to discuss how to be a fisher of men i.e. how do you tell others about Jesus? An extract from Sermons4kids:fishing for people offers a good analogy and is included at the end of this lesson.

Songs:

- “Jesus called them one by one” - uses the tune “Jesus loves me this I know”
- “Twelve Disciples”
  or
- Children can make up their own song or rap to remember the disciples’ names!

Activities:

- Children may like to create an art piece as a response to the lesson or based on the lesson. An interesting design is included at the end of this lesson. See http://pinterest.com/prackrat/bible-art/?page=3 for more inspiring ideas.

References:

www.kidssundayschool.com
www.sermons4kids.com
http://pinterest.com
**Songs:**

**I will make you fishers of men**

I will make you fishers of men  
Fishers of men, fishers of men  
I will make you fishers of men  
Fishers of men, fishers of men  
If you follow me  
If you follow me (x2)  
I will make you fishers of men if you follow me.

**Jesus called them one by one**  
(Use the tune “Jesus loves me this I know”)

Jesus called them one by one,  
Peter, Andrew, James and John  
Next came Phillip, Thomas too,  
Matthew and Bartholomew

**Chorus**

Yes, Jesus called them (X3)  
He called them one by one  
James, the one they called the less,  
Simon also Thadaeus,  
Twelve apostles Judas made,  
Jesus was by him betrayed

**Peter and James and John in a sailboat**

Peter and James and John in a sailboat (x3)  
Out on the beautiful sea

They fished all night but they caught nothing(X3)  
Out on the beautiful sea  
Along came Jesus walking on the water (x3)  
Out on the beautiful sea  
He said “throw your nets over on the other side” (X3)  
Out on the beautiful sea  
The nets were filled with great big fishes (X3)  
Out on the beautiful sea

**There were twelve disciples**

There were twelve disciples Jesus called to help Him:  
Simon Peter, Andrew, James, his brother John  
Philip, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus,  
Thaddeus, Simon, Judas, and Bartholomew.

He has called us, too. He has called us, too.  
We are His disciples, I am one and you! (X2)

The tunes to all these songs can be found on the internet – “Cedarmont kids” always has a good version.
"Come, follow me."
Jesus said,
"and I will make you fishers of men."
Matthew 4:19
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Outstanding Characteristics</th>
<th>Major events in life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simon Peter (Son of John)</td>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>Impulsive; later — bold in preaching about Jesus</td>
<td>One of three in core group of disciples; recognised Jesus as the Messiah; disowned Christ and repented; preached Pentecost sermon; a leader of the Jerusalem church; baptized Gentiles; wrote 1 and 2 Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James (Son of Zebedee); he and his brother were called the “Sons of Thunder”</td>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>Ambitious; short-tempered; judgemental; deeply committed to Jesus</td>
<td>Also in core group; he and his brother John asked Jesus for places of honour in His Kingdom; wanted to call fire down to destroy a Samaritan village; first disciple to be martyred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John (Son of Zebedee), James’ brother, and “the disciple whom Jesus loved”</td>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>Ambitious; judgemental; later — very loving</td>
<td>Third disciple in core group; asked Jesus for a place of honour in His kingdom; wanted to call fire down to destroy a Samaritan village; a leader of the Jerusalem Church; wrote the Gospel of John and 1,2,3 John and Revelation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew (Peter’s brother)</td>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>Eager to bring others to Jesus</td>
<td>Accepted John the Baptist’s testimony about Jesus; told Peter about Jesus; he and Philip told Jesus that Greeks wanted to see Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>Questioning attitude</td>
<td>Told Nathanael about Jesus; wondered how Jesus could feed the 5 000; asked Jesus to show his followers God the Father; he and Andrew told Jesus that Greeks wanted to see Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartholomew (Nathanael)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Honesty and straightforwardness</td>
<td>Initially rejected Jesus because Jesus was from Nazareth but acknowledged him as the “Son of God” and “King of Israel” when they met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew (Levi)</td>
<td>Tax collector</td>
<td>Despised outcast because of his dishonest career</td>
<td>Abandoned his corrupt (and financially profitable) way of life to follow Jesus; invited Jesus to a party with his notorious friends; wrote the gospel of Matthew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas (the twin)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Courage and doubt</td>
<td>Suggested the disciples go with Jesus to Bethany — even if it meant death; asked Jesus about where He was going; refused to believe Jesus was risen until he could see Jesus alive and touch His wounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James (son of Alphaeus)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Became one of Jesus’ disciples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thaddaeus (Judas, son of James)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Asked Jesus why He would reveal Himself to His followers and not to the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon the Zealot</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Fierce patriotism</td>
<td>Became a disciple of Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judas Iscariot</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Treacherous and greedy</td>
<td>Became one of Jesus’ disciples; betrayed Jesus; killed himself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Life Application Bible*
Fishing for People
(sermons4kids)

Theme: Telling others about Jesus. (Third Sunday after the Epiphany.)

Object: A rod and reel or other fishing equipment

Scripture: Jesus called out to them, "Come, be my disciples, and I will show you how to fish for people!" And they left their nets at once and went with him. Matthew 4:19-20 (NLT)

Do you enjoy fishing? Have you ever caught a fish? Fishing is a great sport, and if you have ever been fishing and have caught a fish, you know that there is a great feeling of excitement when you catch a fish. One of the things that makes fishing such a great sport is that it doesn't matter if you are young or old or if you are a girl or a boy -- you can still be good at fishing.

What does it take to be good at catching fish? First of all, you need to be properly equipped. You can't just get piece of string, put a hook on it, and tie it on the end of a stick and expect to catch very many fish, can you? No! If you are serious about fishing, you will make sure that you have all the right equipment. You will want a nice rod and reel, like this one I have this morning.

The next thing you need to know is that you can't sit around talking with your friends about fishing or reading fishing magazines and expect to catch any fish. You have to go where the fish are to catch fish!

Finally, if you want to be good at fishing, you must learn patience. Sometimes the fish just aren't biting. I guess that is the main reason I was never very good at fishing. I thought that you should catch a fish the minute your hook hit the water -- and if I ever went fishing and didn't catch anything -- well, that's why I gave up fishing.

One day, Jesus was walking along the seashore when he saw two brothers named Peter and Andrew. Jesus knew that they made their living by fishing, so he called out to them, "Follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" Do you know what they did? They laid down their fishing nets and followed Jesus.

Jesus wants you and me to fish for people too. That means that he wants us to tell others about what he has done for us and what he wants to do for them. What does it take to be a fisher of people?

First, we need to be properly equipped. We need to know what the Bible teaches and learn how to share it with others.

Next, we need to remember that we can't just sit around reading the Bible and talking about fishing for people and expect to bring them to Jesus. We have to go out where the people are and tell them about Jesus.

Finally, we must learn patience. Everybody we tell about Jesus isn't going to believe. Some people just won't be interested, but we can't give up. We just have to keep telling people about Jesus and let Jesus take care of the rest. If we will do these things, we can really become fishers of people like Jesus wants us to be. If you think there is a great feeling of excitement in catching a fish, just imagine how exciting it must be to bring someone to Jesus!

Dear Jesus, help us to become fishers of people. Help us to tell others what you have done for us -- and what you want to do for them. Amen.
**The Bee-attitudes**  
*(From the Sermon on the Mount)*

**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Between 28 January and 3 February**

**Reading:** Matthew 5: 1-12  
**Theme:** True happiness is found in Jesus  
**Memory verses:**
- “And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8  
- “Rejoice and be glad” Matt 5:12a

---

**Information for the teacher:**

The Sermon on the Mount can be found in Matthew 5,6 & 7. It is the essence of the Christian Faith. Jesus, in his first ‘big sermon’ to his disciples and the crowds who had followed him wanted to teach the people about the Kingdom of Heaven. He began his sermon with the Beatitudes.

The word ‘beatitude’ means happy or blessed which is seen as ‘an exclamation of inner joy and peace that comes from being right with God’.

The word ‘blessed’ means more than happiness. It implies the fortunate or enviable state of those who are in God’s kingdom. The Beatitudes do not promise laughter, pleasure or earthly prosperity. In modern society we are often led to believe that people who are wealthy, good looking, intelligent etc are blessed. To Jesus ‘blessed’ means the experience of hope and joy, independent of outward circumstances. To find hope and joy, the deepest form of happiness, follow Jesus, no matter what the cost.

Jesus was addressing ordinary people: people who were poor in Spirit, sad, meek, those who were seeking righteousness, peace, in fact they were ordinary people struggling with life. He wanted to reassure them that God’s kingdom belonged to all of them and that God’s blessings were available to all of them. He also wanted them to know that regardless of their outward circumstances, they can have the deepest form of happiness and joy, a joy that only comes from knowing God.

The Beatitudes is the highest standard of living God wants us to aspire to. They’re not an easy list to follow but require a complete change in attitude in our heart and lifestyle. If our children learn them now, it might become more of a lifestyle for them and they won't have to make such a change after they've made more worldly habits as they get older.
Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 - 6 years):

Lesson Objective:
- To teach children that we are special to God and He wants us to be happy.
- We are called to live a life that makes God happy.

Attention Grabber:
- Take the children for a walk outside and find some “treasures” along the way e.g. pretty flower, insects and seeds. Discuss what they see, hear, smell and touch.

Bible Story: Matthew 5: 1-12. Read from a Children’s Bible only if the Bible relates the story using very simple language, else simply use a picture of Jesus teaching people and just go straight into the discussion below.

Discussion:
- In last week’s lesson we learnt that Jesus chose special friends to help with His work. Since Jesus was a teacher, He wanted to tell them how they should live, so one day He took them up to a mountain and told them that God wants us to be happy.
- What makes you happy? What makes you sad?
- What has God done to make us happy?
  *He has given us a beautiful world – use the things found along the walk to expand on this.*
  *He has given us eyes to see, ears to hear, noses to smell and taste buds to taste. He has also given us parents, friends etc*
- God also wants us to do things that make Him happy – how do we do that?
  *By being kind to others, helping others, trying to make others happy when they are sad etc.*
- Now let’s hear what God was telling His disciples (special friends). He said even though you may be sad, I want to make you feel better again. I want to give you a special hug and tell you that you are going to be happy again. Jesus said you get a special blessing if you are sad / mourning. God also says that you must not be mean to others. You must not be a bully. God really likes it when you are kind and nice to others. Jesus tells us to be peacemakers. When we are good then God is happy and others are also happy.
- Have you ever watched a bee buzzing around in a garden? What sound does a bee make? Get the children to make a buzzing sound like a bee. Bring a toy bee or a picture of a bee to class. Do you think a bee is happy or sad?
- As you watch that bee, you will see that he isn’t worried about a thing in the world. He is too busy enjoying all of the beautiful flowers that God has provided for him. He is as busy and as happy as a bee can be.
• We are all like little bees and God’s Kingdom is our bee-hive. What should our be(e)-aviour be like in the Bee-hive?

**We should share when others are selfish; love when people hate; be nice when others are teasing etc**

**Craft ideas:**

• Make a bee using a yellow balloon and decorate it with black stripes – write on it “Bee happy”.
• Make a bookmark using your fingerprint and yellow paint to make the body of a bee. Once dry decorate it with black stripes and wings. Write on the bookmark “Bee happy”.
• A colouring-in activity is at the end of this lesson

**Songs (words are at the end of this lesson)**

• Oh, be careful little eyes, what you see
• If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands
• This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made
• Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice
• Children love playing musical instruments, so bring along drums, shakers, bells etc to make the singing session a really happy occasion!

**Prayer:** Dear Lord Jesus, help us to be happy like a bee. Help us to try to make others happy by being caring, kind, helpful........ (children can add in more). Amen
Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:
- To understand the meaning of the phrases from the Beatitudes
- To apply the phrases from the Beatitudes to their lives

Attention Grabber:
- How would you describe yourself? Are you a happy or a sad person? Outgoing or shy? (You may like to add more descriptions)
- If you were to describe yourself as an animal or insect what would you be and why?
- How would you describe a bee? A bee buzzes happily through life, enjoying all the beautiful flowers God has provided. Perhaps we should all try to adopt the attitude of a bee. Today we will be discussing the Beatitudes, which we have renamed the Be(e)-attitudes – the attitudes and behaviour God wishes for us.

Bible Story: Matthew 5: 1- 12.

Discussion and questions:
- The Beatitudes are full of beautiful language but are not easy to understand. Give the children the background to the beatitudes based on the information at the beginning of the lesson. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:
  1. What are the Beatitudes?
  2. With what word does each Beatitude start?
  3. What is the meaning of ‘blessed’?
- Write each Beatitude on a separate piece of paper and put in a box. Put children into 8 groups and each group takes one piece of paper from the box. Ask them to discuss that particular beatitude in their groups and then share with the class.
- The following information can be used to aid you in the discussion on the meaning of the beatitudes. There are many explanations to the beatitudes – biblical scholars differ in their opinions, so you may prefer to use a different interpretation. The depth to which you discuss each of the beatitudes will depend on your age group.

1. **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God**
   This Beatitude can be seen as an overall summary of all the Beatitudes that follow. When you are feeling down, for whatever reason – it may be that you have lost someone close to you, or you have no money, or you have been mistreated. It is when you are stripped of earthly pleasure and you have nothing else to turn to that you realise that God is always there for you – to lean on, to give you strength and to guide you.

2. **Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted**
   When you feel that you have lost what is most dear to you, it is often then that you feel the love of God most strongly. Jesus wants the disciples to know that the sadness is only temporary as God is there to provide comfort.
3. **Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth**
   To be meek is to be humble, considerate, tolerant and understanding with others. You do not treat others harshly. To be meek is to be gentle but not a “push-over” – you are firm on what you stand for. Jesus is the best example of meekness and we are called to follow His ways.

4. **Blessed are those who hunger for righteousness, for they will be filled**
   When you stand up for what you believe, rather than just fitting in with the crowd, it is then that you find fulfilment – purpose in your life.

5. **Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy**
   When you show compassion and forgiveness to others, others (as well as God!) will show compassion to you.

6. **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God**
   When your heart is right with God – when God is at the centre of your life and when you are free of sin, it is then that you will see God is at work in the world around you.

7. **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God**
   When you help others to get along peacefully with one another, the world will become more like that which God intended it to be. When you aren’t a bully and aren’t mean to others, God is happy to say, “you are my child”.

8. **Blessed are they who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.**
   Persecution does not necessarily imply physical torture. Simply being isolated by others, or bullied or teased because of what you stand for is also a form of persecution. When this happens, remain firm in your beliefs - The ways of the world are not always the ways of God.

   The persecution of black South Africans during apartheid is well known to us. In our world today we hear and read about Christians in Egypt and Nigeria being persecuted. Jesus comforts the persecuted by saying that they are blessed and that the kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

---

**Application Questions**

- What is the difference between joy and happiness?
  Happiness *is dependent on external circumstances e.g. wealth, friends. Joy is not dependent on external factors – it comes from within us – it comes from knowing God and following His ways.*

- What is Ubuntu? How does Ubuntu help us to live a life that is pleasing to God?
  Ubuntu *is an ancient African word meaning ‘humanity to others’. It also means ‘I am what I am because of who we all are.’ Ubuntu is a very different way of living from what modern society teaches.*

- Discuss which beatitude each child would like to work on / think about this week.
Craft ideas:

- Make a collage of pictures and drawings that represent the Beatitudes. Example, draw a picture of a cross, then label it “Blessed are the persecuted” or get a picture of Nelson Mandela and write, “Blessed are the peacemakers”. A picture of a doctor looking after a patient or a little child saving an insect could represent the merciful.
- Make a bookmark. Using your fingerprint and yellow finger paint, make the shape of a bee. Make a few bees and decorate them with black stripes and wings once they are dry. Label the bookmark “The Bee-attitudes”. By each bee print write the attitudes you wish to have, based on the Sermon on the Mount i.e. Bee kind/merciful; Bee righteous; Bee humble/meek; Bee joyful/content/happy/ Bee a peacemaker; Bee pure; Bee a comforter.

Songs:

- The joy of the Lord is my strength
- Righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost

Physical activities:

- **Marching to a different drum beat.** Make a rap using the words of the Beatitudes. Sing your rap while someone plays a drum to demonstrate that you are marching to a different beat.
- **Ladder Game:** Put children into two groups or three depending on your numbers and have them draw a ladder on the ground similar to a hop scotch. They must then take turns to jump from one rung to the next repeating the Beatitudes from 1-8. If they make a mistake they will exit the game and the person next in line will start again from the beginning. The object of the game is to see which group gets to the top of the ladder first.

Prayer:

Put the children back into their groups and ask each group to write a prayer for their particular Beatitude on a piece of paper. Now pray these prayers as a group. Finish off with the following prayer.

Dear Father. Help us to have the happiness that you want for us – happiness that comes not from what happens to us, but from what happens inside of us. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

References:

http://www.sermons4kids.com
www.dtlk-bible.com
MY BEE-ATTITUDE

I promise to be KIND, GIVING, SHARING, LOVING, CARING, HUMBLE, PEACEFUL, FORGIVING, just like Jesus. I am happy because he has a big reward waiting for me in heaven.
## Songs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Oh, be careful little eyes what you see</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tune: If you’re happy and you know it..)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, be careful little eyes, what you see.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, be careful little eyes, what you see.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's a Father up above, looking down in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tender love,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So be careful little eyes, what you see.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Be careful little ears what you hear....** |
| **Be careful little mouth what you say....** |
| **Be careful little hands, what you touch...** |
| **Be careful little feet, where you go** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>This is the day</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is the day (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the Lord has made (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will rejoice (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And be glad in it (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the day that the Lord has made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will rejoice and be glad in it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the day (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the Lord has made</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Rejoice in the Lord always</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejoice, Rejoice and again I say rejoice (x2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The joy of the Lord is my strength</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The joy of the Lord is my strength (x3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh the joy of the Lord is my strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He fills my mouth with laughter, ha, ha, ha, ha! (x3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh He fills my mouth with laughter, ha, ha, ha, ha!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s the kingdom of God (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t you want to be a part of the kingdom (x3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come on everybody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's love in the kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So much love in the kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's love in the kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come on everybody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's peace in the kingdom......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's joy in the kingdom......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm an heir of the kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So glad I'm and heir of the kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m and heir of the kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come on everybody</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>J-O-Y</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Sing to the tune of Jingle Bells)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-O-Y, J-O-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is what is means:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus is first, yourself last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And others are in-between</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. If you have access to the internet, the tunes to these songs can be easily found. Use other appropriate songs if you are not familiar with these songs.
We are called to be the salt and light of the world *

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Between 4 February and 10 February

Reading: Matthew 5: 13-20
Theme: Shine for Jesus!
Memory verse: ‘Let your light shine so that people will see your good deeds and praise God.
Matt 5:16

Information for the teacher:

This lesson is part of the Sermon on the Mount which begins with the Beatitudes which we covered in the previous lesson. It’s part of Jesus’ teaching on how we should live.

In biblical times salt was very valuable for preserving food and giving it flavour. Light was also very important – it was not easy to get in the way we can just switch on a light today. Without light, darkness reigns! And so to call the disciples the salt of the earth and the light of the world meant that they were of great value and the gospel message that Jesus brought was of great value to the world.

If seasoning has no flavour, it has no value. Similarly, if Christians do not live as children of God and if they make no effort to affect the world around them, they are of little value to the world. If we are too much like the world, we are worthless. Christians should not blend in with everyone else in the sense that they should not simply accept all the values of the world.

Instead, we should reflect the values of Jesus. We care for those in need. We care about the environment and do not pollute it. We treat all people equally, not being friends with only the popular people. We stand up for what we know is right and just. We speak up when injustice is done to others. In this way we affect others positively, just as seasoning brings out the best flavour in food.

The Bible also says that Jesus is the light of the world - He takes the darkness away. He overcomes all that is evil and not of God. Jesus wants us to go out into the world to also be a shining light – to do as He would do and tell others about Him.
Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objective:
• To understand the meaning of shining for Jesus

🌟 Attention Grabber
If possible take your children to a dark room or make your class dark.

Questions:
• Who likes it when it is dark?
  (Answers will vary)
• What do you do to take the darkness away?
  Switch on a light; light a candle etc
  Light one or a number of candles.
• Who likes candles? Why?
  Answers may include: they give us light; take away darkness; warmth; remind us of parties!

📚 Bible Story: Matthew 5: 13 - 20. Read from a Children’s Bible only if the story is told in very simple language, else just go straight onto the discussion below.

💡 Discussion and activity:
• Do you know that Jesus wants us to be like little candles in the world? He wants us to shine for Him to make the world a better place.
• Do you want to shine for Jesus?
• To shine for Jesus means to do things that would make Him happy.

Activity: For this activity you require a few candles. Call out certain actions such as telling a lie, sharing a sandwich, picking up toys, pinching a younger child – see the teacher’s information at the beginning of this lesson for more ideas. If the action is a good action they can light a candle. If a bad action is called, that candles can be blown out. The children will enjoy lighting and blowing out candles but be very careful that they don’t burn themselves or cause a fire!
Song:

This little light of mine

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine (3X)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, (Children shout NO), I’m gonna let it shine (3X)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Craft:

- Candle jars: You will need: small glass jar, tea light or small candle, tissue paper, glue, glitter. Decorate the jar and then when the candle is lit it will shine through the tissue paper decorations. This craft reminds us of the light of God which shines through us.
- Refer to the Older Kids craft section for other ideas that you can adapt for your age group should the above idea be too difficult to organise.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus. Help us to let out lights shine for you and to always do what is good. Amen

Older Children (7 - 13 years)

Lesson objective:

- To know that Jesus wants us to shine as a light in the world and to make a difference to those around us.

Attention Grabber

Let the children taste some popcorn without salt. Ask them to describe how it tastes. Is it missing something? Then add salt and ask them whether they prefer the popcorn with or without the salt.

Bible Story: Matt 5: 13-20
Discussion:

- Jesus says we are to be the salt of the earth. What do you think He meant by that? 
  *We add flavour to the world; we make the world a better place; we make a difference to the world. You can add to this discussion by referring to the teacher information at the beginning of this lesson.*

- Now light a candle / shine a torch. Jesus also said we are the light of the world. When you see a candle, what words / emotions do you associate with it? 
  *Answers should include: brightness; takes darkness away; warmth; shine etc*

- What do you think Jesus meant by saying we are the light of the world? 
  *Answers should include: we make a difference for the better; we show others how to live by our example; we bring warmth.*

- Jesus is also described as the Light of the World – He takes darkness away. What is the darkness in the world? 
  *Sin*

- Jesus wants us to be like Him and shine as a light in the world and do as He would do. What happens if we cover our light? 
  *The light goes out or you no longer see it. We therefore no longer make a difference!*

- It is sometimes difficult to shine for Jesus, especially when it is just you, but when there are a number of you, you can make a great difference! (Light a number of candles to illustrate this point.)

Application Questions:

1. A family moves into your neighbourhood. They do not speak English well and they have customs that may seem strange to you. Some parents have told their children not to play with the new children. Then one day, your new neighbour asks your family to come for a visit. What will you do?

2. You have just moved to a new school. There is a girl in your class who seems to have no friends at all. She dresses in clothes that are out of style. When you ask about her, the other kids tell you that her parents left her and she lives with her grandmother. Everyday she walks home ahead of you, alone. One day she asks you to walk with her, but you are afraid of what the other kids will say about you. What will you do?

3. You are a girl taking a class where you learn about cooking and sewing. There is one boy in your class. All the girls laugh at him, and the boys make fun of him for taking the class. But he is very good at cooking and sewing. How do you feel about him?

*Something to think about!* What good deeds can you do so that your light shines and people can see God in you? If others see that you do good things this will be a way of showing God to others. It is through what you do that others will want to get to know God also.
Homework!
A candle was given to you at your Baptism. What does the priest say as the candle is given to you? (Perhaps next week have a small treat for the first person to give you the correct answer)

Craft ideas:
- The children can use the dripping wax of a burning candle to draw on paper anything relating to the lesson. You can discuss that we are like wax and we shine through the happenings of the world i.e. the paint.
- Silhouette pictures: A child sits in front of a lamp so that their shadow is cast onto a piece of paper. Trace around their shadow – you might just do their head, or they could make a shape with their hands that you can trace around. They then colour in or paint the silhouette.
- Sun catchers: You will need: clear self-adhesive paper, scissors, sequins, glitter or glitter glue, hole punch. Cut out a shape of clear self-adhesive paper, something related to this lesson such as a candle, a star or even a cross. Decorate the shape with sequins within a centimetre of the edge. Cover with another piece of self adhesive paper and press down firmly. Trim the ends. Punch a hole in the shape and attach a thread. Hang in your window to catch the sun.
  When the light shines through the suncatcher, it reminds us that God shines His light in us. We need to live out this light of God, in both word and deed, so that when others see us doing what is right, they will see God in us.
- If it is difficult to obtain materials for the above crafts, the children can simply draw a picture of what they have learnt today.

Songs:
(Two songs are suggested below – the first is a hymn and the second a song from Hillsongs. You can find the tunes for both on the internet, or you could encourage your children to come up with their own tune and make up actions! You can of course instead use a song which you are familiar with that follows the theme for today)

**Walk in the light in the beautiful light of God**
Walk in the light the Lord hath given  
To guide thy steps aright  
His Holy Spirit, sent from heav’n  
Can cheer the darkest night  
Chorus:  
Walk in the light  
(Walk in the light, in the beautiful light of God.)  
Walk in the light  
(Walk in the light, in the beautiful light of God.)  
Walk in the light  
(Walk in the light, in the beautiful light of God.)  
Walk in the light
Prayer: Today is a good opportunity to make use of the ACTS method of prayer. (See pg 7 of this manual for more on this type of prayer). Try to get each child to contribute to the prayer and try to base it on today’s lesson. “Brainstorm” ideas beforehand – the children will then find it easier to add to the prayers.

References:


Learning Centres for Advent and Lent, Doris Murphy, Twenty –Third Publications, 200
Parable: The mustard seed

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Between 11 February and 17 February

Reading: Luke 17:6; Matthew 17:20
Theme: Faith
Memory verses:
- We walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Cor 5:7
- If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, “Be uprooted and be planted in the sea,” and it will obey you. Luke 17:6

Information for the teacher:

Jesus often spoke about the Kingdom of God by using parables. These parables made use of concepts in the people’s environment at that time, which made it easy for them to relate to, but their significance was much deeper. Jesus would tell what seemed like a simple story but the real meaning was hidden and people had to think very hard to get the meaning. He only revealed the true meaning of the parables to his disciples.

In Matthew 13: 31-32, Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a mustard seed which was the *smallest seed used by farmers at the time but when planted, grows into a huge tree that the birds of the air perch in its branches.

In Luke 17:6, Jesus told his disciples that they should have faith the size of a mustard seed. With faith the size of a mustard seed, they could uproot a mulberry tree and have it planted in the sea.

This lesson will focus on faith based on the Luke reading. Faith according to NIV study bible “is complete and humble obedience to God’s will, readiness to do whatever God calls you to do... A mustard seed is small but is alive and growing. Like a tiny seed a small amount of genuine faith in God will take root and grow.”

* You may question how Jesus could have referred to the mustard seed as the smallest seed since there are seeds that are much smaller. Note that in Jesus’ day, the black mustard seed was the smallest seed used by farmers. Jesus was also comparing the size of the seed to the size of the grown plant.
Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:
- To teach them that to have faith in God is to believe in him and to love Jesus as their friend
- To tell them that their love starts off small like a mustard seed but they have to make it grow

Attention Grabber

Match the seeds to the correct tree – try as much as possible to get actual seeds

Show children different types of seeds including a mustard seed (if possible!)

Speak to them about the size of the seeds in relation to the size of the tree i.e. does a small seed grow into a small tree?
Discussion

- Explain in simple terms, what is faith. *To believe in God*
- Tell them that Jesus wants us to have faith the size of a mustard seed which is one of the smallest seeds but grows into a big tree. (Show them the mustard seeds and a picture of the tree). The same way in which this seed grows into a big tree, then their faith should grow and grow and become big. Let them use their hands to demonstrate how big their faith will grow.
- Explain that one of the ways to show faith (belief) in our friend Jesus is to pray.

Activity

*Growing for Jesus: Planting time:* Give the children a little tin on which is written, ‘I’m Growing for Jesus’ and with some potting soil. Give them a few radish seeds to plant. Water the seeds. You could give the kids their tins to take home and bring the following week or you could keep them for the week and bring them back the following week. (Radish seeds sprout very quickly)

*Craft:* Colouring-in. See end of lesson

*Song:*

```
Read your Bible

Read your Bible,
Pray every day, pray every day, pray every day.
Read your Bible, pray every day, And you’ll grow, grow, grow.
```
Prayer

**Teaspoon Prayers:** Explain that just as a mustard seed is small we can pray small (teaspoon) prayers to God. Give the kids a picture of a teaspoon. Have them draw little black dots in the spoon to represent mustard seeds.

Help them to think of little teaspoon prayers they could give to God e.g. *I am sorry, bless my sister.* Make a big chart with a huge teaspoon inside. Write all of their prayers on the chart and stick on the wall.
Older Children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives
- To teach children what is faith; its importance and
- To teach them how to grow their faith
- To teach them that with the smallest amount of faith in God, they can achieve amazing things.

Attention Grabber
- Show the children different seeds including a few mustard seeds. Show them images of plants from each of the seeds then ask them to match the seed to the plant.
- Get them to discuss the size of the seeds in relation to the size of the tree i.e. Does a small seed grow into a small tree?
- Ask: Have you ever planted a seed and watched it grow or seen someone plant a seed and watched it grow? What size was the seed and what was the size of the plant?
- What does a seed need to grow? 
  Water, light, nutrients (food)
- Continue by telling them that the lesson is about growing our faith.

Bible Story: Luke 17:6 - Read the passage from the bible or get a child to read

Questions and Discussion

Fact questions:
1. What is faith?
   Belief in God.
2. To what seed did Jesus compare faith?
Review Questions
1. Is Jesus suggesting that we need a lot of faith?
2. What was Jesus trying to teach his disciples and what does he want you and me to learn?
   That it doesn’t take a lot of faith to do awesome things.
3. What have we learned about faith today?
   Don’t ask for faith so that we can do great things -- ask for faith the size of a mustard seed so that we can see God do great things!

Application Questions
1. Do you think Jesus was suggesting that you and I go around trying to move trees just to prove that we have faith?
2. If not, why?
   Because the results don’t depend on us, they depend on God.
3. Name one person that you know who has faith or a person from the bible who has shown a lot of faith?
4. What can we do to grow our faith?
   Read the bible, stay close to God i.e. walk in the light

Song: Walk in the light (See previous lesson on “We are called to be the salt and light of the world” for the words)

Craft ideas:
- How does your faith grow? Just as a plant needs sunlight, water and nutrients, in the same way our faith needs the light of Christ, prayer and the word of God to grow. The children can draw a picture where they represent faith as a tree; sunlight as the light of Christ; Water as prayer and nutrients in the soil as the word of God.
- Make a bookmark. Give the children pieces of card and have them design their own bookmark similar to the ones shown on the next page. They could also stick several mustard seeds in the shape of a cross and write, ‘I have faith the size of a mustard seed’. 
Prayer: Tea spoon prayers: Refer to the younger children’s section for more on this.

References:
www.bing.com//images
http://www.sermons4kids.com/parable_mustard_seed_colorpg.jpg
The Parable of the Mustard Seed

“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, “Be uprooted and be planted in the sea,” and it will obey you. Luke 17:6
Jesus feeds the 5 000

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
Between 18 February and 24 February

Reading: Matthew 14:1-21
Theme: Little becomes much in God's hands; Giving of ourselves; Jesus, the Lord of all possibilities.
Memory verses:
- They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. Matthew 14:20 (NIV)
- God is able to do much more than we can ask or think. (Eph 3:20)

Information for the teacher:

Please tailor the activities, questions and discussion to suit your class’s needs. It is important that the children realise the enormity of what Jesus did. It was a miracle. God is able to do great things, if we make ourselves available to do His work. We are His hands, His feet and His voice in this world. Children need to know that they can make a difference even though they are young.
Lesson Suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:
- To know the story of the feeding of the 5 000
- To know that God can do more than we can ever imagine

Attention Grabber
Have a picnic basket. Ask the class what they would put into it, if they were going on a picnic. Ask them whether they thought the food in their basket would feed the whole class, the Sunday school, the church, the whole suburb.

Bible Story: Read the story from a children’s bible. (Bible Reading: Matthew 14:13-21)

Discussion
- How many people had come to listen to Jesus? 5000
- Everyone was hungry. Jesus asked if anyone had food.
- Did anyone have food? Yes a boy had two fish and five rolls of bread. It was his lunch. Ask the children to hold up 5 fingers then 2 fingers.
- Do you think that was enough to feed everyone? No!! Would it be enough to feed our whole church? No!!
- Enough to feed our class? Let’s see! Share two marshmallow fish and five rolls with the class.
- If I were to share my snack with you today, there might be enough for each of you to have one tiny bite. But when Jesus blessed the loaves and fish, the Bible says that everyone ate until they were full! Wait! That’s not all! After they had eaten until they were full, they gathered up the leftovers and there were twelve baskets full.
- Can you imagine taking these five rolls and two fish and feeding a large crowd of people and still have food left over. We couldn’t do it, but God could !!
- How did this happen? Jesus performed a miracle. He made something happen which seems impossible to us.
- If you were that little boy, would you have shared your lunch with all those people? Or would you have thought that what you had was too little to make a difference? Would you share your lunch with a friend if he leaves his lunch at home? Do you ever give your pocket money to poor people at the side of the road? God wants us to care for each other. Caring is sharing!
- What can we learn from this Bible lesson today? We learn that when we give what we have to God, He can take it, bless it, and do more than we could ever imagine. Even though we may not have very much, little becomes much when it is placed in God’s hands.
Activity: Give each child a small bottle of bubbles and tell them to see how MUCH can come out of a very small bottle of bubbles. Tell children that ALL those bubbles can represent all the things that GOD can do when HE is in our lives!!

Snack: Make some popcorn in front of the class showing them that you can get a lot from very little.

Craft: Buy some bread dough from the Supermarket. Give each child some dough which they can mould into five loaves and two fish. Let them take it home to be baked.

Worksheet: Find 10 mistakes made by the artist. See end of lesson for worksheet

Song:

My God is so Big

My God is so Big, so strong and so mighty, there’s nothing my God cannot do. (X2)

The mountains are His. The rivers are His, the stars are His handiwork too.

My God is so big, so strong and so mighty, there’s nothing my God cannot do.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father. Thank you for the food and clothes you give us. Help us to give to others. Thank you for miracles and that you can take something small that we give you and make it into something big! Amen

Older Children (7 -13 years):

Lesson objectives:

• To know the story of the feeding of the 5 000
• To know that God can do more than we can ever imagine

Attention Grabber

How many people go to your school? Have you ever been to a rugby/soccer match? How many people were there? Can you describe how big a crowd of 5000 is? About 10 high schools if each high school has 500 pupils.
Bible Story: Read the story from a children’s bible. (Bible Reading: Matthew 14:13-21)

Discussion:

Fact Questions:
- How many people came to listen to Jesus? (5 000)
- As it got late in the day what did the disciples ask Jesus to do with the people? Send the people away to buy their own food.
- How did Jesus reply to the disciples request to send the people away? Jesus told the disciples to give the people something to eat.
- How much food could the disciples find? Five loaves of bread and two fish.
- What did Jesus do before distributing the food? Looked to heaven and gave thanks.
- Did everyone get enough to eat? Yes, they all ate and were satisfied.
- Was any of the food wasted? No, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of broken pieces of bread & fish.
- Did Jesus feed the people spiritually or physically? He first feed them spiritually by teaching them many things, He then fed their bodies.

Emotion Questions
- Which is more amazing to you, that Jesus can feed five thousand people or that He can heal illnesses?
- How do you think the boy felt when He saw Jesus use his meagre lunch to feed over 5,000 people?

Application Questions
- Is anyone too young (poor, untalented, etc.) to do anything for Jesus?
- What have you got to offer God?
- What have you learnt from this story? (Allow the children to express what this lesson meant to them. Further discuss that from this lesson we can learn that when we give to God, He can take it, bless it, and do more than we can ever imagine. Even though we may not have very much, little becomes much when placed in God’s hands.)
- Furthermore, Jesus turned a food shortage into an all-you-can-eat buffet! He can change things in our lives, too! Maybe you think you are no good at anything. You feel that everyone has more talent than you. Jesus wants to take the little ability you think you have and turn it into something great. However, for God to do big things in our lives he needs a generous heart. The little boy in this story was a key partner in the miracle as he had a generous heart. You are called to be like that little boy.
**Just for fun!** If Jesus fed just the 5,000 men with five loaves of bread, how many loaves did He miraculously create? (Assume that each person ate 1 loaf of bread)

**Activities:**
- Bring a loaf of bread to Sunday school and enough ingredients to make sandwiches. Let them each make their favourite sandwich, which they are not allowed to eat. They could either eat it or give this to some deserving person on their way home.
- Divide the class into teams and let them decode the message in the number game given below. (The message reads as follows: So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.)
- **Worksheet:** Find 10 mistakes made by the artist. See end of lesson for worksheet

**Snack:** Serve popcorn or have a picnic and serve rolls and fish fingers.

**Prayer:**
Thank God that He has the power to do anything. Pray that we will give Him everything we have so that He can do amazing things through our lives.

Or

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving each of us something that we can give back to You. Help us to give cheerfully knowing that, no matter how small our gifts may seem You can turn them into a miracle. Amen

**References:**
- www.kidssundayschool.com
- Jumbo Bible Activity Book, Candle Book Publishers, 2009
Jesus Feeds 5,000

Matthew 14:13-21

Subtract the numbers in the box to get the code number for each letter. Then solve the puzzle.

Jesus used five small barley
loaves and two small fish

to feed over 5,000
people. What
a wonderful
miracle
this was!

Afterward,
Jesus told his
disciples to gather
up what was left.
He wanted nothing
to be wasted. What
miraculous sign
happened then?

|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
Jesus feeds a crowd of over 5,000 people.
Which disciple brought a boy's loaves of bread and fish to Jesus?
Can you find ten mistakes by the artist?
You can read about this in John 6:1-15.
Jesus walks on water

Transfiguration
Between 25 February and 3 March

Reading: Matthew 14: 22-23
Theme: Trust
Memory verses:
- “You of little faith,” He said, “Why did you doubt?” Matt: 14:31
- “Then those who were in the boat worshipped Him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.” Matt 14:32

Information for the teacher:

This lesson teaches about the miracle of Jesus walking on water, and the disciple Peter who had enough faith in Jesus that he too could walk on water.

This lesson about trust in God follows on from last week’s lesson on faith. Peter trusted Jesus enough that he could walk on water. However, a little after he ventured out of the boat, Peter took his eyes off Jesus. His faith became a bit shaky when he realised what he was doing and lost his trust in Jesus. As a result he started to sink.

Further on in the bible we also read that Peter denied knowing Jesus (Matt 26: 69 -75) – he did this for fear of his life. However, after Jesus’ death Peter went on to tell others about Jesus and helped to spread the gospel throughout the world. He also performed miracles and later died for Jesus. From Peter’s life we learn that we all stumble in our walk with God but it is important to persevere in our faith. Always remember, when you trust in God, all things are possible!
Lesson suggestions:
Younger Children (3 – 6 years):
Suggested lesson objectives:
- To know that Jesus performed miracles.
- To know that all things are possible if you keep your eyes on Jesus.
- To know that Jesus is your friend.

Attention Grabber
Lily pad game: make “lily pads” out of paper or some other suitable material. Children jump from one lily pad to the other. As the game progresses, move the lily pads further and further away from each other to make the jump bigger and bigger. Any one who is not able to jump to the next lily pad is out of the game – they fall into the water, of course, and sink!

Bible Story: Matt 14:22-33. Discuss the basic story using an illustrated Children’s Bible. You may have a felt board with the characters of the story, which can then move around to depict the story.

Discussion:
- One discussion leading from this story is that we can’t walk on water - Jesus therefore performed a miracle! Remind the children of what a miracle is - He made something happen which seems impossible to us.
- Another point for discussion is that if we keep our eyes on Jesus, all things are possible – see the discussion points for the older children but you will probably need to keep it simpler and shorter!
- For the very small children you may want to simply say that Jesus is your friend and will never let you down.

Song: Turn your eyes upon Jesus (words can be found at end of lesson)
**Craft:**
Children cut and colour-in the characters of the lesson – pictures are provided at the end of this lesson. They can draw the sea and sky on paper. The children can retell the story by moving the characters around. A slit can be made in the sea for Peter to slide in and out of to show him floating and sinking. Once they have told the story they can glue their characters onto the background.

**Physical activities:**
1) Bring a washing basket which the kids can use as a “boat” to play out the story.

2) Floating and sinking: Bring a selection of objects to class which float or sink e.g. pen, metal spoon, shell, penny, polystyrene, sponge. Bring a bowl of water and children can experiment for themselves. They may want to go find some objects of their own to see if they float or sink. For fun the older children may also want to try float a needle – this can be done by first placing the needle on a piece of toilet paper and then slowly removing the paper from under the needle – this does take a lot of practice!

**Extra activity:** Re-read the bible passage, this time from a bible such as NIV – Whenever the children hear the name, “Jesus,” say, “With Him, nothing is impossible!”

**Snack:** Jelly boats – this needs to be prepared before the lesson as the jelly will not set in time. The boats can be made out of small cups filled with jelly. A square piece of paper attached to a tooth pick can be stuck into the jelly to act as a sail.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord Jesus. Thank you for miracles. Thank you for being my friend and that you never let me down. Amen

or

Dear Lord Jesus. Thank you that you performed so many miracles which help us to realise that you are God and that all things are possible through you. Help us to keep our eyes on you in all that we do. Amen
Older children (7 - 13 years):

Lesson objective:
- To know that Jesus performed miracles
- To know that all things are possible if you keep your eyes on Jesus.

Attention Grabber

Trust Fall – this activity illustrates trust. It involves a student who falls back (by stiffening his body and leaning backwards) into the arms of his teachers and other students.

Below are some very specific rules and safety precautions for this:
1. Choose a volunteer who is willing to fall.
2. Choose 6 to 8 other students to be catchers. They will make two rows, facing each other with their arms outstretched and holding hands. If possible have something soft like pillows on the ground between the catchers in case the volunteer falls through the catchers’ hands.
3. The volunteer must stand with his feet together and his back to the catchers.
4. He will need to stiffen his body and fold his arms across his chest. Tell him not to bend his body. He needs to stay completely stiff. If a person goes into a sitting position while falling, they are more likely to slip through the hands of the catchers.
5. Stress to the catchers the importance of not goofing around. This is serious. If they don’t do their job, someone could get hurt.
6. Remove from catching (or don’t choose) any students that you don’t trust to follow your instructions.
7. Then when you tell him to (and only when YOU tell him to), he will fall backwards, keeping his body straight and stiff, into the arms of the catchers.

(*NOTE: You are the teacher and you know your students. Never do an activity if you feel that your class could not handle the responsibility of that activity.)

Question: Was it hard to fall backwards? Would it have been harder if you couldn’t see the catchers?

Discuss: Some people have trouble trusting God because they can’t see Him, but you can trust Him because He promised to never leave you and never let go of you.

Bible Story: Matt 14: 22- 33
Discussion:

- Jesus walked on water. This was a miracle. What is a miracle? *He made something happen which seems impossible to us.*

- Why was Peter able to walk on water? *He trusted Jesus*

- Would you trust Jesus like Peter did? – Would you believe that you can walk on water?

- The following experiment may help to illustrate the above point, and also impress the kids! *Experiment:* Place an egg in a glass containing salted water and another egg in a glass containing plain water. Don’t tell the children that the one glass contains salty water! The egg will float in salted water and sink in plain water. (Do check that this experiment works before going to class! – you may need to add more salt if it does not.)

- What stops us from trusting God? *Fear and non-belief.*

- Peter had enough belief in Jesus that he could walk on water. Perhaps, at this stage the other disciples did not fully realize who Jesus was. They did, however, with time come to realize that Jesus was God and that through Him all things are possible. They would go on to proclaim Jesus to others and perform miracles in His name. Some of them even died for Jesus.

- How do we increase our trust in God? *Read the Bible, pray, go to church, spend time with other Christians, keep our eyes focussed on Jesus!*

- You may want to further discuss that although Peter trusted Jesus that he could walk on water, he also doubted his faith at times. Refer to the information for the teacher at the beginning of this lesson for more on this discussion.

**Song:** Turn your eyes upon Jesus. (Words are at the end of the lesson)
Craft:
Make a boat! The boat design found at the end of this lesson should initially float, but as it gets saturated with water, it sinks and is ruined. This starts an interesting discussion about why the boat floated to begin with and then sank – you can relate it to the story of Peter walking on water and then sinking. Make sure you practice this boat before coming to class – it is tricky!

Extra activities:
1) Re-read the bible passage, this time from a bible such as NIV – Whenever the children hear the name, “Jesus,” say, “With Him, nothing is impossible!”
2) For fun, the children may want to try float a needle – this can be done by first placing the needle on a piece of toilet paper and then slowly removing the paper from under the needle – this does take a lot of practice!

Worksheet: cross-word puzzle (See end of lesson. Remove the clues which appear on the work sheet if you want to make it harder.)

Snack: Jelly boats – see younger kids section for description

Prayer:
Dear Lord Jesus. Thank you that you performed so many miracles which help us to realise that you are God and that all things are possible through you. Help us to keep our eyes focussed on you in all that we do. Amen

(Encourage the children to add to this prayer and perhaps also include the song, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus”, to the prayer for the children to reflect on.)

Turn your eyes upon Jesus

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

Fix your eyes upon Jesus
Let nobody else take His place
So by hour and hour
You may know His power
Til at last you have run the great race.

References:

www.dtlk-bible.com
www.threethirtyministries.org
Craft for the younger children

Jesus

Peter

Disciples in boat
(Peter can also be in boat to begin with)
Craft for older kids – making a boat

Fold paper in half

Fold down each side to make triangles. Your paper should now resemble the picture in diagram 3.

At the bottom, fold only the top strip upward so that the paper now resembles the picture in diagram 4.

Fold the two small triangles behind the boat so that they “disappear”, as in diagram 5.

Turn the paper over and fold the lower strip upwards. You have formed the well known paper hat. (If you are finding this too challenging, stop here and wear your hats as sailor hats!)

If you’re feeling brave enough to continue on to make a boat: Turn the hat 90° and open it so that you’re looking inside the part you would wear on your head. The thumbs must be inside.
Lay the upper and the lower parts on each other so it looks like a diamond. See the diagram alongside.

Fold the lower front triangle upwards.......

So it looks like:

Turn the paper over and fold the other triangle up. It basically looks like the hat without the brim this time.

Open the hat again and put the upper part on the lower one to make a diamond shape again, so that your paper now resembles diagram 12.

Pull the upper corners of the triangles in the direction of the arrows. As you pull these corners you’ll see the boat forming before your eyes.
Jesus Walks on Water Crossword

Across
1. As soon as Jesus got into the boat the water became ____.  
4. When Peter first started to walk on water he had lots of this.  
6. Jesus (and Peter for a bit) are the only people to ever walk on this.  
8. The name of the disciple that wanted to go out on the water.  
9. Peter started to sink when he took these off of Jesus.

Down
2. When the disciples first saw Jesus they were ____.  
3. The disciples were in this when they saw Jesus on the water.  
5. We can always ____ God to be here for us!  
6. There were many ____ in the water because it was so windy.  
7. Jesus wasn't on the boat because he was ____ by himself.

afraid  boat  calm  trust  faith  Peter  praying eyes  water  waves
The Garden of Eden – the serpent tempts Adam and Eve *

First Sunday in Lent
9 March 2014

Reading: Gen2:15 – 17; 3:1 -7
Theme: Sin and Temptation
Memory verses: “You will surely not die”, the serpent said to the woman, “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Gen 3: 4-5

Information for the teacher:

The theme chosen for Lent this year is God’s reconciliation with humankind. In this theme we explore how God provides a perfect world for us. We however, constantly sin and move away from God. God, who has an infinite love for us, constantly tries to draw us back to Him.

In the First Sunday of Lent we will learn that God’s plan for His people was a perfect world – the Garden of Eden. However His plan was “destroyed” when Adam and Eve ate from the tree from which they were forbidden to eat. Because they had not listened to God, they separated themselves from God’s perfect plan for their life and for humankind.

However, God loved His creation and had a plan to restore His perfect world. Throughout the Old Testament we learn of many people whom God used to bring His people back to Him.

One such person was Abraham who we will learn about in our Second Sunday of Lent. Abraham was a loyal servant of God, and through his faith, God used him and blessed him – Abraham became the Father of the Nation of Israel, a group of people who would be dedicated to keeping His ways alive in the world.

God gave His people laws to live by, The Ten Commandments, which we will learn about in the Third Sunday of Lent. Despite these laws people still disobeyed God and moved away from Him.

Yet God still loved His people and desired to draw them back into His perfect world. He sent prophets into the world to warn people of their sin, but still they continued to go their own way.

He finally sent His Son Jesus into the world to show His people how to live, which we will learn about on Palm Sunday.

The idea we would like to convey to the children this Lent is that God always has a perfect plan for His people. Mankind, however, constantly sins and moves away from God. Amazingly, God still loves His people and constantly makes new plans to restore His perfect world and to reconcile His people to Him.
Lesson suggestions:
Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson objectives:
- To learn about the story of Adam and Eve and their fall
- To know that we all sin but that God forgives us

Bible Story: Gen 2 and 3 (Adam and Eve and their temptation) – Use a children’s illustrated Bible

Discussion:
- Briefly discuss the Creation Story and the perfect world that God had created.
- Discuss that Adam and Eve had been told not to eat from one tree in the garden, but Eve was tempted by the snake to do so.
- As a result they had to leave the Garden of Eden.

Questions:
- “Would you have eaten the apple from the tree?”
- “Have you ever eaten cookies that you were told not to eat?”
- What bad things do you do? This is called sin.
- We all sin - what is important is that we realise we have sinned, and then ask God for forgiveness, and then not do to it again!

Craft ideas:
- A set of pictures has been included in this lesson which can be made into a little book for the children to relate the story of Adam and Eve. Go to http://www.dltk-bible.com/genesis/chapter2-index.htm for the original version as well as a simpler version for the pre-school children. If you are not able to print a copy for each child, the children can draw their own pictures to make their own book.
- Spiral snake. Draw a spiral onto a piece of paper. Cut along the lines to make a spiral snake. You could write onto the snake something that the child will try to not do anymore. Decorate the snake.

Physical activity:
- If time, play “Standing against temptation”. A description of this activity is given in the older kids section.
Snack:
Put out any snack that would be very tempting to eat e.g. cake, popcorn, chips. Put it by the children as they do their craft but instruct them NOT to eat the snack until they have finished their work.

Prayer:
Dear Lord Jesus. We are sorry for the things we do wrong, like ............ (ask the children to say what they are sorry for). Please help us not to do these bad things again. Amen

Older children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:
- To know that this is the start of Lent and the meaning of Lent
- To gain an understanding of the Lenten theme
- To learn about the story of Adam and Eve and their fall
- To know that we are all tempted and sin, but God forgives us if we confess
- To know that sin has consequences
- To commit to a change in behaviour over the next 40 days

Bible Story: Gen 2 and 3 (The story of Adam and Eve and their temptation) – Use a Children’s illustrated Bible

Discussion:
- Introduce the Lenten Theme, “God’s reconciliation with Humankind”. God’s ideal for us is a perfect world in which God and His people live in harmony. We, however, constantly sin and move away from God. God constantly responds by drawing us back to Him.
- Briefly discuss the Creation Story and the perfect world that God had created.
- Discuss that Adam and Eve had been told not to eat from one tree in the garden, but Eve was tempted by the snake to do so.
- As a result they had to leave the Garden of Eden.

Questions:
- “Would you have eaten the apple from the tree?”
- “Have you ever eaten cookies that you were told not to eat?”
- Encourage the children to think of other sins that they may be tempted to do e.g. “Do you find it tempting to gossip about others?”; “Do you ever tell a white lie?”
- What is the difference between temptation and sin?
  Temptation is thinking about doing something wrong; Sin is DOING something wrong
- We all sin - what is important is that we realise we have sinned, and then ask God for forgiveness, and then to not do it again!

- Why it is important not to sin? – afterall, what is the problem with a little white lie?
• The problem is that there are consequences – for Adam and Eve it was banishment from Eden. For us, often one lie leads to another, which may lead to a less than ideal situation. When we commit sin it makes it easier to commit another sin, and then another, until sin takes over our lives. It’s just like eating chips or popcorn – if you eat one, you want another and another........

• This is the start of Lent, the time before Easter, when we remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert without food and water, resisting temptation. It is during this time where we look at our lives and think of what we are doing wrong in our lives and attempt during this time to stop a particular type of behaviour.

• Give some time for the children to think of something that they are doing in their lives that they don’t like and encourage them to try to change their behaviour over this period before Easter.

Lesson demonstration:
Exploding snake: Each child can write a sin on to a craft stick e.g. swearing, lying, cheating, greed, watching television shows that aren’t pleasing to God etc. The craft sticks are weaved together to make a “snake”. If one of the sticks is removed the “snake” explodes! This is a very effective way of explaining how one sin leads to another and that sin has consequences. It is best to watch the video on Youtube video if you have access to the internet on how to make the weave using craft sticks and to see the exciting explosion for yourself! You can access this website from http://www.daniellesplace.com/html/Bible-Themes-Adam-and-Eve.html. Practice putting the snake together until you have mastered it!

Craft ideas:
• Throughout Lent, the children could be encouraged to make a booklet that helps them to more fully understand the Lenten Theme for this year i.e. God’s reconciliation with His people. Today they would make a cover page with the theme for Lent written on it and complete the first page of the book i.e. God created a perfect world; Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were banished from the Garden of Eden. God’s plan for His perfect world was destroyed. They can illustrate this first lesson in any way they wish. You may want to bring in materials other than crayons to help them produce creative artworks e.g. tissue paper, glitter etc.

• The memory verse could be cut up into separate words and there could then be a competition to unscramble the words to reform the memory verse. The children could then draw a tree and the words could be stuck on the tree in the correct order. Each word could be in the shape of an apple. This activity could form the first page of the booklet for Lent.
**Physical activity:**

Take a stand against temptation! Children choose partners. They stand facing each other at arm’s length away. They hold hands at their shoulders, palms facing their partner. On a given count, they slap hands trying to knock each other off balance. The first child to fall or move his feet is the loser.

Another variation is for two children to stand at arm’s length apart, each with a soft pillow. They are to stand on one leg, and on command they start hitting the other person with their pillow. The one to touch down his raised foot or to fall loses.

The lesson learnt from this activity is that we sometimes struggle against the devil and temptation and need to do our best to overcome this battle.

**Worksheet:** Unscramble Words. See end of lesson for this activity. The answers do appear on the worksheet, so remove them if you want to make it harder for the kids!

**Snack:** Put out any snack that would be very tempting to eat e.g. cake, popcorn, chips. Put it by the children as they do their craft but instruct them NOT to eat the snack until they have finished their work.

**Prayer:** Pass a bitten apple around the group during time of confession and ask each child to look at it as they bring to mind the times they have gone along with temptation instead of holding onto God’s rule of love. Pray that during Lent they may have the strength to stop a particular type of behaviour. Remind them of God’s love for them and that through confession, they are cleansed of their sins.

**References:**

- www.dtlk-bible.com
- 101 games for the elementary teacher, Jackson’s Ridge
God made a man. 
God named him Adam.

God made a beautiful home for Adam - the garden of Eden.

God made the animals. 
God let Adam give them names.

God made a woman. 
God named her Eve.
God said, “Don’t touch the special tree.”

The snake tempted Adam and Eve to eat the fruit.

God was sad.

Adam and Eve had to leave the beautiful garden of Eden.
Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Adam & Eve
Anagram

Word List:
ashamed, clothes, disobey, garden, happy
life, partner, snake, temptation, unique

efil

einquu

aenprrt

adegnr

ahppy

aekns

bdeiosy

aadehms

ceholst

aeimnoptttt
The Call and Blessing of Abram*

Second Sunday in Lent
16 March 2014

Reading: Gen 12:1-4a
Theme: Have faith in God
Memory verse: “I will make you a great nation and I will bless you.” Gen12:2

Information for the teacher:

This week we continue with our Lenten theme: God’s reconciliation with His people. After the fall of Adam and Eve, people continued to sin despite God’s judgement on them -punishment like the Great Flood. However, some people remained obedient to God and tried to follow Him. One such person was Abraham.

God called Abram to leave his homeland and to go to a land He would show him. God promised Abram that He would bless him with many children, as many as the stars in the sky.

God changed Abram’s name to Abraham, “Father of many”, shortly before his son was conceived. From this point on, the Bible refers to him as Abraham. Abraham is one of the Patriarchs of the Bible – he is considered to be one of the fathers of the human race.

It was through Abraham that God started the Nation of Israel in order to have a group of people who would be dedicated to keeping His ways alive in the world. It was also through Abraham’s line that Jesus was born into the world.

Abraham was therefore part of God’s plan to reconcile humankind with Himself. It was as a result of Abraham’s faith that God was able to bless both Abraham and all humankind.

A map has been provided which you can use to show where Abraham lived and other key areas such as Mesopotamia, the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates River. Mesopotamia is thought to be the place where the Garden of Eden had been.

It will also be useful to have a map of the world to show where this area is in relation to the rest of the world. The map also shows Abraham’s journey from Ur to Canaan. His route was indirect as he followed the rivers, rather than attempting to cross the desert.
Lesson suggestions

Younger children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson objectives:
- To know that Abraham listened to God
- To know that God was happy with Abraham and gave him many children
- To know that God always keeps His promises

**Attention Grabber:** Have you ever looked up at the sky at night? How many stars do you think there are? Can you count them?

**Bible story:** Gen 12 – God’s promise to Abraham

**Discussion:** Use an illustrated Bible to tell the story. Use the lesson objectives and select pieces of information from the “Information for the teacher” that you think is relevant to your age group to guide you in your lesson. Your main idea should be that because Abraham obeyed God he was blessed with many children, as many as the stars in the sky. (Gen 22:15 - 17)

**Song:** Father Abraham had many sons (see older children’s section for words.)

**Craft:** Make stars - the children cut out as many stars as they like, colour them and perhaps decorate them with glitter, and then attach them to a bulletin board with the memory verse, “I will bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky” Gen 22:15-17

**Physical Activity:** Children can build a tent from old sheets and towels. They can pretend to be living in the desert and eat their snack, which could be dates or raisins.

**Snack:** A large number of sweets/raisins are placed in a bottle. Children are asked to guess how many there are, then eat them! Have another bottle filled with sand ask them to guess how many grains of sand there are in the bottle. This snack serves as an illustration of the promise that God made to Abram that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars.
Prayer:
Dear God,
Thank you for keeping your promises!
Thank you for blessing us!
Thank you that through Abraham’s family, Jesus came to the whole world!
Thank you for loving us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Older Children (7 – 13 years):

Lesson objectives:
- To know that God always keeps His promises
- To know that Abraham was a man of God who had a lot of faith
- To know that God blessed Abraham and made him the Father of Israel
- To know that all humankind was blessed through Abraham, because Jesus eventually came from his family
- To understand that Abraham was part of God’s plan to reconcile humankind with Himself

Attention Grabber:

Faith Walk
Before Class: Obtain a blindfold which can be used for the children
During Class: Clear an area of the classroom for the activity. While the children watch, place a few obstacles in the area, for example: a chair, a table, a basket full of toys, etc. Choose one child (or adult) to be the helper. Ask for a volunteer to wear the blindfold while the helper guides them across the room, missing the obstacles.

Question: Did you need to have faith in the other person to lead you round the room?

Today we will learn about Abraham who had faith in God to lead him to a new land.

Bible story: Gen 12 – God’s promise to Abram. Use an illustrated Bible to tell the story. Select pieces of information from the “Information for the teacher” that you think is relevant to your age group to guide you in your lesson. Use the map for the children to visualise Abram’s journey more easily.
God Keeps His Promises

Today we are going to talk about promises.

- What is a promise? A promise is when you say you will do something, and then you do it.
- Have you ever made a promise?
- Did you keep your promise?
- How long did you keep it?
- When God makes a promise, He ALWAYS keeps it! And He keeps it FOREVER!

God spoke to Abraham and asked him to go to a New Land.

- God spoke to Abraham and told him “Leave your country, your people, and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.”
- Wow! That was a big request, wasn’t it? Leave your country...your people... and your father’s household... That would be tough wouldn’t it? Leaving everything that was familiar, and even your family. (Of course, Abraham was an adult; he was already 75 years old! Still... it’s tough.)
- AND... Abraham didn’t even know where God was asking him to go. Remember... he’d never been there. All he knew was that God had asked him to go.
- What would you do? Would you go? Would you chance it?

God Promised Abraham that He would Bless Him

- God promised Abraham to make him into a great nation. This was quite a promise considering that Abraham and Sarah had no children at this stage. Eventually Sarah had Isaac when she was 90 years old.
- He also promised to bless him and to make his name great. God also promised that all peoples on the earth would be blessed through him.
- Those are some pretty BIG promises, but Abraham knew that God always keeps His promises.

Abraham believed God

- Abraham believed God (What does that mean, to believe someone?) It means that you know that person will keep his promise. You know you can have FAITH in that person.
- Abraham knew that God ALWAYS keeps His promises
- Abraham believed God. Abraham had faith in God.

Abraham Obeyed God

- So since Abraham believed God, Abraham obeyed God
- This time obeying God meant going somewhere
- The Bible says that Abraham left his country and went to the land God showed him
God Kept His Promises

- He did make him into a great nation. A son Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah. Isaac was the father of Jacob who was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- He did bless him and make his name great. Abraham was blessed with many descendants, as many as the stars in the sky. (Gen 22:15-17). Through Abraham, God started the Nation of Israel in order to have a group of people who would be dedicated to keeping His ways alive in the world.
- Furthermore, as a result of Abraham’s faith, all the peoples of the earth were blessed, because Jesus eventually came from his family! Through Jesus, God was able to reconcile mankind with Himself and continue His plan for humankind.

Let’s pray and thank God for the faith of Abraham, and for always keeping His promises and blessing us!

Prayer:
Dear God,
Thank you for keeping your promises!
Thank you for blessing us!
Thank you that through Abraham’s family, Jesus came to the whole world!
Please help us to have the same amount of faith as Abraham in our lives, so that you are able to work through us to achieve your plans for this world.
Amen.

Activity
- Who are the descendants of Abraham? Children can fill in Abraham’s family tree: his son was Isaac and his grandson was Jacob who had twelve sons, who then went on to form the twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob’s twelve sons were: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph and Benjamin. (Gen 35: 23-26). Jesus was born from Abraham’s family and from the line of Judah. The title of this page can be: “Abraham, Father of the Nations”
- Add this lesson to the booklet started last week. The children can possibly use the “Abraham family tree activity” described in the activity above to depict this week’s lesson or they may instead choose to illustrate the memory verse.

Sing “Father Abraham” – The children will sing and have fun moving around!
Father Abraham had many sons...
Many sons had Father Abraham!
And I am one of them, and so are you...
So, let’s just praise the LORD!
Right arm!
(With each of following, repeat chorus and add one movement as described below.)
Right Arm, Left Arm!
Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Foot!
Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Foot, Left Foot!
Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Foot, Left Foot, Chin Up!
Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Foot, Left Foot, Chin Up, Turn Around!
Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Foot, Left Foot, Chin Up, Turn Around, Sit Down!!!
Reference:

The Ten Commandments

Third Sunday in Lent
23 March 2014

Readings: Exodus 20: 1-22; Deuteronomy 5: 1-22

Theme: Obeying God

Memory verses:
- “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 love your neighbour as yourself.” Luke 10:27
- “What does the Lord your God ask of you? But to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord’s commands and decrees.” Deuteronomy 10:12-13
- “This is my happy way of life; obeying your commands.” Ps 119:56

Information for the teacher:

This third week of Lent we continue with our theme: God’s reconciliation with humankind. We learn that thousands of years ago God gave his people a set of rules that would be a guide through life enabling them to enjoy a special relationship with Him and with one another.

The Ten Commandments were given to the people of Israel on their way out of slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land (Canaan) around 1450BC. Now when we speak of rules many of us might say that rules, or laws restrict us and we often see them as a burden. “Don’t do this” and “Don’t do that”. What happens if there were no rules?

The purpose of God’s law (rules) is not to restrict us, rather they are to be seen as a gift that show us how to live, rules that free us to live in order and harmony.

It is important to remember that these commandments were not made for just that period in history. The Ten Commandments were made for human nature and are therefore applicable for all seasons, all centuries, and all cultures- their purpose - to show how to live.

The Ten Commandments occur in two places in the Bible. In Exodus 20 we have an account of how they were given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and in Deuteronomy 5 they are repeated in the introduction to the Jewish laws.

Of the Ten Commandments, I to III deal with our behaviour towards God. Commandments IV to X deal with our behaviour towards other people.

As you review them, think about how each applies to decisions you make daily in your own life. We should approach the commandments in a positive way as this will lead us to do more than the bare minimum of a negative approach. Also our obedience must be motivated not by fear but by love, we don't keep the commandments so that God will love us; we keep the commandments because God loves us.

Jesus brought in a new and more exciting law- the law of love. Far from contradicting or abolishing the old law, the new law goes beyond it, and so brings it to perfection. Jesus said that all of God’s laws could be reduced to two: Love of God and love of neighbour. In truth there is only one law-the law of love.
Lesson suggestions:

Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To know that God gives us rules to live by.
- To know that God has given us rules so that we can live happily. To do this we must love God and those around us.

🌟 Attention grabber:

The Traffic Light Game: Everyone stands facing the leader. The leader explains that when “red” is called everyone must stand still with their arms at their sides. When “yellow” is called everyone should walk on the spot and when “green” is called everyone starts running on the spot. You can call out the commands faster and faster to make it harder.

Discuss that it is important obey a traffic light to avoid an accident. God has also given us rules to follow. He gives us rules to follow so that we can live happily.

📚 Bible story: Use a Children’s Bible that simply tells the children the story of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 19 and 20) The children do not need to know what each of these commandments are, just that God gave His people rules to live by. Perhaps just mention that God’s people, the Israelites, were in the desert. Moses went up to mountain to meet with God and it was there that Moses was given the Ten Commandments, which are the laws for God’s people to live by. These laws were written on two stone tablets.

🔍 Discussion:

- God has given us rules to follow.
- He gave us these rules so that we can live happily – if there are no rules to a game, or if someone does not follow the rules, the game is not fun.
- The first rule is that we must love God. How do we do that? *By reading our Bible, praying and worshipping God*
- The second rule is that we must love everyone around us. How do we show our love? *Do not steal, do not lie, do not say horrible things about other people; listen to our moms and dads; try not to get angry with others or fight with others etc.*

🎶 Songs: Love the Lord your God. (Words are at the end of this lesson)
Crafts:

- The children can make a traffic light. Cut out red, green and yellow circles and glue them on a black rectangle.
- The following rhyme can be added: **Stop** and listen to God’s rules.
  **Be slow** to anger and never cruel.
  **Go** with God and he’ll go with you.

©2000, Digital by Design, Inc

The children can be encouraged to learn this rhyme.
- The class can produce a banner with the memory verse “Love the Lord your God with all your heart......” Luke 10:27. Children can decorate the banner with hearts to remind them that they are to love the Lord and their neighbours.

Physical activities:

1) Play some more fun age appropriate games e.g. “Simon says”. Emphasise that a game is only fun if you follow the rules.
2) Set up roads on the floor with masking tape. Bring in small cars and trucks for the children to play with. Put up road signs at intersections.

Worksheet: Find the ten differences between two pictures. (See end of lesson).

Snack: Make heart shaped biscuits that the children can decorate with icing and sprinkles to remind them that we are to love God and love our neighbour.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus. Help us to love You with all of our hearts. (Get the children to add in how we can do that). Help us to love everyone around us. (Again get the children to add in how we can do that). We are sorry for the times we do not love enough. Amen

Older children (7 -13 years):

Lesson objectives:

- To learn the Ten Commandments
- To understand that God has given us rules to guide us in our lives, and to help us enjoy a special relationship with God, and to help us live in harmony with one another
- To understand that God has given us rules out of love for us and we must obey them
- To know that the Ten Commandments can be summarised by the New Commandment which Jesus taught which says “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind, and love your neighbour as yourself”
Attention grabber:

- Bring to class a compass, a road map or some road signs. All these guide, direct us and point us in the right direction so that we are able to reach our destination. God’s set of rules are the same, they were given to us as a gift of love to guide us through life so that we might enjoy our lives in relationship with him and with each other.

or

- Play a game. A game you may like to play follows. Emphasise that a game is only fun if everyone follows the rules.

Colours
Choose 4 different colours of paper (less if you have a very small group) and make some “Post-it” sized cards with these papers – about 7 – 10 of each colour.

Get your group into a circle, sitting on chairs. Go around and give each person a colour (just say a colour, do not give them a piece of paper), make it random – don’t just go in order. They need to remember their colour for the game!

Shuffle the cards and leave them in a pile. Each time you call out a colour from the pile, all the students given that colour must move one space to the right. If there is a free seat next to them, then they sit on it. If there is a person to their right, they sit on their lap. If they are being sat on they are then unable to move. You may at some stage in the game have a number of people sitting on each other’s lap – keep going as this adds to the fun.

The game ends when the first person makes it all the way around to their original chair. (Children should have left an item under their chair so they can easily identify it.)

Start the game by holding up a card and saying the colour and waiting for the children to move, but as the game goes on you move faster and faster - this adds to the fun and laughter!

Bible story: Use a Children’s Bible that simply tells the children the story of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 19 and 20) Besides teaching the Ten Commandments it is also good to put the story in context i.e. God’s people (The Israelites) were in the desert. Moses went up to mountain to meet with God and it was there that Moses was given the Ten Commandments, which are the laws for God’s people to live by. These laws were written on two stone tablets.
Discussion:

- Remind the children of our Lenten Theme, “God’s reconciliation with Humankind” – that God wishes for us a perfect world and constantly tries to draw us back to Him. You may like to briefly discuss the main points from the past 2 weeks in Lent - details can be found in the “Information for teacher” section in the first lesson for Lent. Today’s lesson teaches us that God wants us to live in harmony with Him and others, that’s why He has given us laws to live by.
- Teach the Ten Commandments using one or more of the activities suggested in the section below.
- Be sure to discuss all the lesson objectives as outlined above. Use parts of the Information for the Teacher section which you think are relevant to your age group.

Song: “Love the Lord your God” (Words are at the end of this lesson)

Suggested Activities:
(A number of ideas for activities, crafts and prayer have been suggested below. You will need to carefully select ideas that will most suit your group)

Here is a fun and effective way to learn the Ten Commandments. It is difficult to explain in places, but use your imagination or even make up your own way to remember a particular Commandment.

1. **I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other gods than me.**
   Hold up 1 finger. God is the One and only God
2. **You shall not make an idol of anything and worship it.**
   Hold up 2 fingers. No “two-timing”. Only worship God – you may not worship an idol of any form.
3. **You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.**
   Hold up 3 fingers. God is the “Father, Son and Holy Spirit” – three in one. This is His personal identity. Do not use any form of God’s name frivolously or in a curse.
4. **Remember the Lord’s day and keep it holy.**
   Keeping your thumb and forefinger (first finger) of one hand at right angles to each other, and using the forefinger of your other hand, a 4 can be made. It can look like a deckchair for resting!
5. **Honor your father and your mother.**
   Hold up 5 fingers. Your mom and dad and caregiver hold your hand and look after you, so always speak well of them.
6. **You shall not murder.**
   A 6 can be formed by keeping your thumb straight and curling your first finger towards your thumb. It also looks like a hang man’s noose!
7. **You shall not commit adultery.**
   Form a 7 with any of your fingers. If you turn a 7 upside down it becomes a “L” that stands for LOVE. Always be faithful, loyal and love your partner.
8. **You shall not steal.**
   Make a circle with your thumb and first finger. Do the same with the other hand and bring the two circles together to make an 8. It also looks like a pair of handcuffs!
9. **You shall not give false evidence (or lie).**
10. **You shall not covet (or envy) the possessions of others (or envy).**
    Put up 1 finger with your one hand and make a circle with your other to form a 10. The 1 looks like a lean man. The 0 looks like a round man. The 1 says to the 0, I wish I had what you have!
The children pair up and practice memorizing the Ten Commandments. When both have memorized them, have them form two parallel lines, facing each other. Have the first person in line 1 recite the First Commandment. If said exactly right, the first person in line 2 recites the Second Commandment, then the second in line 1 recites the Third Commandment, and so on. With an incorrect response, the very next person in the opposite line begins again with the First Commandment. Once completed, the activity can be started again – try to go faster!

Read each of the scenarios below and let the children answer what should be done, based on the 10 commandments... maybe you can think of some more!

1. The class was taking a test. Julie didn’t know the answer to one of the questions but knew that the person sitting next to her did. All she had to do was glance over to see the answer... what should she do? (Commandment 9!)

2. Justin was playing at a friend’s house and really liked the video game they were playing. He really wanted one at his house and thought it wasn’t fair that his friend had it but he didn’t. What should he do? (Commandment 10 – be thankful for what you have!)

3. Ella was at a birthday party at Chuck E Cheese and she was up at the counter trying to decide on what colour lollipop to get with her tickets. The lady laid out all the colours on the counter for Ella to see better, but then walked away to help someone else. Ella realized that she could pick up all the suckers and walk away... what should she do? (Commandment 8 – don’t steal!)

4. Paul had a bad day at school and really wanted to come home and rest and watch tv. When he walked in the door, his mother asked him to please take out the garbage before watching tv. He didn’t want to and thought he could do it later... what should he do? (Commandment 5! Obey your parents – which means don’t talk back!)


If you have been making a booklet for Lent, the children can add something to their book that they have learnt from this lesson.

Craft: Read Numbers 15:37-41.
God speaks to Moses telling the Israelites to put tassels on the corner of their garments, fastening them with a blue cord to remind them to keep all the commandments.

The children can make a simple tassel by plaiting different colours of wool or ten different colours of ribbon and then tying them off with a blue ribbon, or pasting them to a card. Encourage them to use their tassels as bookmarks for their bibles or to put them in some place as a reminder to keep God’s commandments.

Worksheet: Hieroglyphics fun. (See end of lesson)
Prayer: Before you pray, perhaps “dig deeper” into what the Ten Commandments actually mean e.g. what are some ways people might break the sixth commandment without actually taking someone’s life?

The following reflections may help you in this discussion. You may choose to discuss a few commandments in this amount of depth, particularly those that may be especially relevant to your group.

Once you have had this discussion, encourage the children to pray about what has come out of this discussion.

“Digging deeper” into the Ten Commandments

1. **I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other gods than me.**
   The Israelites had just come from Egypt, a land of many idols and gods. God wanted the Israelites to know that He was the only true God.

2. **You shall not make an idol of anything and worship it.**
   Today we can allow many things to become gods to us – money, fame, work, pleasure. No one sets out with the intention of worshipping these things. But by the amount of time we devote to them, they can grow into gods that ultimately control our thoughts and energies. Letting God hold the central place in our lives keeps these things from turning into gods.

3. **You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.**
   God’s name is special because it carries His personal identity. Using it frivolously or in a curse is so common today that we may fail to realize how serious it is. Discuss with your group some of the curses that people use that misuse the name of God. We should respect His name and use it appropriately, speaking it in praise or worship rather than in curse or jest.

4. **Remember the Lord’s day and keep it holy.**
   God commanded a Sabbath because we need to spend unhurried time in worship and rest each week. To have a regular time of rest and worship in our fast paced world demonstrates how important God is to us.

5. **Honor your father and your mother.**
   This means speaking well of your parents and acting in a way that shows courtesy and respect.

6. **You shall not murder.**
   Do not hurt another person in any way, by what you say or by what you do.

7. **You shall not commit adultery.**
   This is the 7th commandment. If you turn a 7 upside down it becomes an L which stands for LOVE. Always be faithful, loyal and love your partner. Do not break up a relationship between two other people.

8. **You shall not steal.**
   How often do you make a copy of a cd/dvd? Think of other instances which are regarded as acceptable behaviour but are in fact depriving others of deserved income.

9. **You shall not give false evidence (or lie).**
   This includes leaving out part of a story, telling a half truth or twisting the facts. Furthermore, be a light to your neighbour, not a source of darkness. Let your words build up, support and comfort your neighbour. If you find nothing good to say about your neighbour, then remain silent.

10. **You shall not covet (or envy) the possessions of others (or envy).**
    Coveting or envying is to wish you have the possessions of others. As a result you may then also resent the fact that others have what you don’t. God knows that possessions never
make anyone happy for long. Since God can supply all our needs, true happiness or contentment is found only in Him. When you begin to covet, try to determine if a more basic need is leading you to envy e.g. you may covet someone’s success, not because you want to take it away from him, but because you would like to feel as appreciated by others as he is. If this is the case, pray that God will help you deal with your resentment and meet your basic needs.

Love the Lord your God
Love the Lord your God
With all your heart and all your soul
And all your mind
And love all mankind as you love yourself

And love
The Lord your God
With all your heart
And all your soul and all your mind

And we’ve got Christian lives to live
We’ve got Jesus love to give
We’ve got nothing to hide
Because in Him we have found love!

References:

www.dtlk-bible.com

www.sermons4kids.com


Jumbo Bible Activity Book, Candle Book Publishers, 2009

100 Activities based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Rossini, E, San Francisco Ignatious Press, 1996
Hieroglyphics Fun

by Nancy S. Williamson

The ancient Egyptians sent messages to each other in pictures called hieroglyphics (say: hy-roh-GLIF-ics). Here is a secret hieroglyphic message for you. What does it say? Try your hand at making other hieroglyphic messages for fun. ©

[Hieroglyphic symbols and images are shown below the text.]
On two slabs of stone were written God's ten commandments.

Find ten differences between the pictures.

You can read these commandments in Exodus 20:1-21.