

Sunday between October 9 and 15 – year A

Preparation

Read [Matthew 22:1-14](#). Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump at you. Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara/propera23.htm>

http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming_faith.cfm?id=251

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/you-are-invited.html>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/pent20mles.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/a/28-a/A-28-a.html>

<http://www.efree.mb.ca/lectionarypuzzles/in-awvx.htm#p28>: word puzzles

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Candle and candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- Green cloth
- Newsprint and markers
- Party invites – have one ready for each child – print the child’s name and in the place of who is hosting put “Jesus”

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you.

Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the candle and the Bible on the cloth. Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

**Creator God you are here,
Loving Jesus you are here,
Holy Spirit you are here;
Come and show us the way. Amen.**

Blow out the candle. Give each child their own party invitation. Ask them what they do when they are given an invitation to the party. What do they do to get ready? If they are hosting a party or their family is hosting a party what do they do to get ready?

(Some possible answers: clean the house, make party food, bake a cake.)

Tell the children that Jesus has invited all of us to a special party – God’s party – which they will hear about in today’s story.

Story Time

Materials needed

- streamers
- tape
- party plates
- tablecloth

Instructions

- Get comfortable with the children to share the story.

Jesus was still teaching in the temple. Jesus had taught the people about the way in which you needed to behave to follow God. Jesus loved to tell stories to the people. Jesus had told the people in the temple the story of the two sons and their father. Jesus had told a story about a landowner and his vineyard. Jesus looked at the people in the temple. He said to them, “I have another story to tell you. It will give you an idea what God’s kingdom is like.”

This is the story that Jesus told the people in the temple.

There once was a king who gave a banquet – a special party – for his son and new daughter in law. They had just got married. He had the servants cleaned up the whole banquet hall. They spread out a new tablecloth on the head table. (Spread out the tablecloth with the children.)

They set the table with special party plates. (Have the children place the plates on the tablecloth.) They put up special decorations. (With the children put up some of the party streamers.) The servants then prepared a whole meal – lots and lots of good food. The king was very happy with how the hall was looking. He said to his servants, “Go and tell those who have been invited that we are ready for them.”

The servants went off to the invited guests. The first one said, “I am too busy. I have to go to my farm.”

Another guest said, “I have to go and take care of my business. I don’t have time for a party right now.”

Some of the guests were very rude. They told the servants to go away. Some of the servants were beaten up by the guests. The servants went back to the king. They told him everything that happened. The king got very angry. He told the servants, “This is what I want you to do. Go out into the streets and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.”

The servants went out into the streets and they gathered everyone who was in the streets. They brought the new guests back to the banquet hall. The guests all had a wonderful time – they enjoyed the food – they enjoyed the music.

Jesus told the people who were listening to his story, “Remember not everyone who is called will be chosen to be part of God’s kingdom.”

Response

Project Idea 1: Party Hats

Everyone loves a party and what better way to show the celebratory mood of this story but to make party hats with the children.

Materials needed

- construction paper
- glitter
- glue
- scissors
- stapler
- markers
- party related stickers
- anything else that can be used to decorate the hats

Instructions

Make cones with the construction paper and staple them together, so that they look hats and will fit on the heads of the children. Give each child a prepared hat and invite them to decorate the hats with the craft materials on hand. As they are working talk with the children about how the reactions of the different people to God's invitation. Help them to think about how they might invite others to come and be part of God's community.

Project Idea 2: Invitation to Church Cards

The children have been invited to God's party by Jesus at the beginning of the story. They can use this response to extend the invitation to others.

Materials needed

- card stock
- fine line markers
- glitter
- religious stickers
- anything else that could be used to decorate the cards with

Instructions

Fold the card stock in half. With the children brainstorm some ideas about phrases that can be used as invitations to church. Some ideas might be: Come and Meet God Today; God Wants to Meet You This Week. Let the children choose which phrase they would like to use and help the younger ones to print it on the cards. As they are decorating the cards have a conversation about who they would like to give the cards to invite to church with them. Encourage the children to give the cards during the week to the people they have chosen.

Project Idea 3: Celebration Snack

What's a party without food. With this response the children will be able to make a snack that they can share with the rest of the parish and their families. When doing this response, be aware of any allergies that might be in the group.

Materials needed

- dried fruit and/or various nuts
- chocolate covered candies – set these all out in bowls
- spoons
- re-sealable plastic bags
- stickers
- permanent markers

Instructions

Have everyone wash their hands – when handling food we all need to be careful. Invite the children to scoop some of everything with the spoons into their bags. When they have an adequate amount of snack items in the bags, invite the children to decorate the bags using the stickers and the markers. You may want to suggest that they print invitation words on the bags if they are going to give them away. Encourage the children to give a bag of celebration snack to someone who needs to hear from God.

Closing

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candle.
Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

**Creator God thank you for loving us,
Loving Jesus thank you for teaching us,
Holy Spirit thank you for helping us grow,
Be with us in everything we do. Amen.**