

## Fourth Sunday of Lent – year C

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### Preparation

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Read [Joshua 5: 9-12](#) and [Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32](#). 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/yearc/lentc4.htm>

<http://www.msscrafter.com/newtestament/prodigal.htm>

<http://children.cccm.com/NTSupportCurriculumPDF/250TheProdigalSon.pdf>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/lent4les.htm>

[http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/lessonPlans/109452\\_115778\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/lessonPlans/109452_115778_ENG_HTM.htm):

scroll down to find the lesson for this Sunday

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/prodigal-son.html>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/c/4Lent-c/K-4Lent-c.html>

### Gathering

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#### Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Candle
- Candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- Purple cloth
- Newsprint and markers
- Basket, star, heart and bread shape (see shape at end of lesson)
- Brown construction paper
- Pencils or pens

Copy the bread shape at the end of the lesson and trace onto the brown construction paper. Make one for each child. Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the Bible on the cloth. Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

**For a time to pray, we bless you God.**

**For a time to learn, we bless you Jesus.**

**For a time to grow, we bless you Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Blow out the candle. Give each child a bread shape. Explain to the children that food is important to all of us. Remind the children that one of the way that the devil tempted Jesus was to get him to turn stones into bread. A long, long time ago the people of God spent a long time wandering in the wilderness going from Egypt to Israel. While they were in the wilderness God provided for them everyday by giving them manna. Have them look at their bread shape and invite them to draw or write a way that God has provided for them recently. Get them to place their bread shapes into the basket.

## Story Time

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### Instructions

- Teach the children the following chant for use during the story:

**Lost and found!**  
**Lost and found!**  
**God will find the lost**  
**And they will be found!**

Lots of people were coming to listen to Jesus and to hear what he had to say about God’s love. Some of those people were considered to be bad people by the leaders of the temple. They were people who collected taxes from others. They were people who didn’t always follow all the rules that they followed. Some of these leaders started to grumble about that to Jesus. They said, “Look you are keeping company with people who are sinners. What are you going to do about it?”

**Lost and found!**  
**Lost and found!**  
**God will find the lost**  
**And they will be found!**

Jesus said, “Here I have a story for you that will help to explain why I spend time with these people.”

Once there was a man who had two sons. When they were grown up the younger son came to his father and said, “Father I want you to give me all of my inheritance now! I want you to divide up your property and give me everything that would become mine when you die.”

The father did as his son asked him. A few days after this the son gathered up everything and travelled to a far away land. He spent all of his money on silly things. Soon he found he had no money at all and needed to go and get a job. The place he was had a famine and there was not enough food for anyone to eat.

**Lost and found!**  
**Lost and found!**  
**God will find the lost**  
**And they will be found!**

The young man got a job working in the field of a man who wanted him to feed the pigs. The young man was so hungry he thought to himself, “I could eat the food the farmer gives to his pigs.” No one gave him any food. Then he began to think, “even the servants at my father’s place are fed better than this”.

The young man stood up and said, “I know what I will do. I will go home and say to my father, ‘Father I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer good enough to be able to be called your son. Treat me like one of your servants.’”

**Lost and found!**  
**Lost and found!**  
**God will find the lost**  
**And they will be found!**

So the young man went back to his father's place. While he was still far away the young man's father saw him and came rushing up to him. The father put his arms around his son and hugged and kissed him. The young man said to his father, "Father I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son. Treat me like one of your servants."

The father called to one of his servants. He said, "Run now and go get a robe – one of the best you can find – put it on my son. Bring a ring and put it on his finger and sandals for his feet! Get the best piece of meat you can find and roast it. We need to celebrate! This is my son! The one who was lost and is now found! The one who was dead and is now alive again!"

**Lost and found!**  
**Lost and found!**  
**God will find the lost**  
**And they will be found!**

They all began to celebrate. The older son who was working out in the fields when the younger son came home didn't know what all the noise and celebration was about. He called over one of the servants and said, "Tell me what is going on."

The servant said, "Oh you don't know. Your brother has come home and your father is giving a big party in his honour because he has him home safe and sound."

The older son got very angry and refused to go into the party. The father came out and asked his son what was wrong. The older son said, "Father you need to listen to me! All these years I have been here and done everything that you have ever asked. Not once have you let me throw a party for my friends! Here your younger son comes home, after wasting all your money, and you give him a party!"

The father said to his son gently, "Son you are always with me and everything that I have is yours. But we have to celebrate and be happy! Your brother who was lost is now found. Come and celebrate with us!"

**Lost and found!**  
**Lost and found!**  
**God will find the lost**  
**And they will be found!**

## Response

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### Project Idea 1: Celebration Balloons

*The theme of the day is forgiveness and celebrating the lost one – making these balloons will help to remind the children of this theme.*

#### Materials needed

- balloon shape at end of lesson
- wax paper
- iron
- ironing board
- tea towels
- crayons
- vegetable peelers
- scissors
- hole punch
- yarn

#### Instructions

Copy the balloon shape at the end of the lesson and cut it out. Prepare the wax paper by making two pieces for each child that are just a bit bigger than the balloon shape. Set up the iron on warm and place a tea towel on the ironing board. Take the paper wrapping off the crayons. Give each child a piece of wax paper and a vegetable peeler. Show them how to gently peel some of the crayon off and onto the wax paper. Suggest that they use a variety of colours and spread the shavings around. When they seem to have enough get them to put the second piece of wax paper on top. Then put it on the tea towel on the ironing board, cover it with another tea towel and gently iron until the shavings are melted – this shouldn't take more than a minute.

Let cool for a few minutes and then trace the balloon shape onto the waxed paper image.

Get the children to cut out their balloons and then use the hole punch to make a hole at the top and tie a piece of yarn on it for a hanger. Remind the children while working that God is very, very happy when we say we are sorry for doing something wrong and that the balloon hanging up at home will help them to remember God's love for us at all times.

### Project Idea 2: Forgiveness Coupons

*We all feel hurt by other people and have hurt other people. These coupons will help the children to say sorry with their families and friends in a tangible way.*

#### Materials needed

- forgiveness coupon template from end of lesson
- white paper
- scissors
- construction paper
- markers
- glue sticks
- stapler and staples

## Instructions

Copy the forgiveness coupon template from the end of the lesson and make one for each child. Read over the coupon message with the children. Have them cut out each coupon and then glue them onto pieces of construction paper that are slightly larger than the original coupon. When they are done, have them staple them together in a little booklet – if they want they can make a front cover for it and print on the front “**Forgiveness Coupons**”. Encourage them to give out their coupons to a family member or friend when they need to be forgiven for something.

## Project Idea 3: Wall of Faith – Balloon Celebrations

*This will be an ongoing activity that the children can do all together throughout the season. Each week they will put up a new symbol onto their wall.*

### Materials needed

- balloon shape at end of lesson
- yellow construction paper
- scissors
- markers
- sticky tack or masking tape

### Instructions

Copy the balloon shape, cut it out and trace onto the yellow construction paper. Give one to each child. Have the children cut out their balloon shape carefully. Remind the children that today’s story is about someone who took all their courage and admitted his mistake and turned around his life. We celebrate when someone does a good thing. Ask them to think about something they want to celebrate with everyone in the group. Have them write or draw their celebration on their balloons. When they are finished have them put up on the wall of faith with the other symbols. If you have enough time go over the previous three symbols to remind the children where they have been so far in Lent.

## Closing

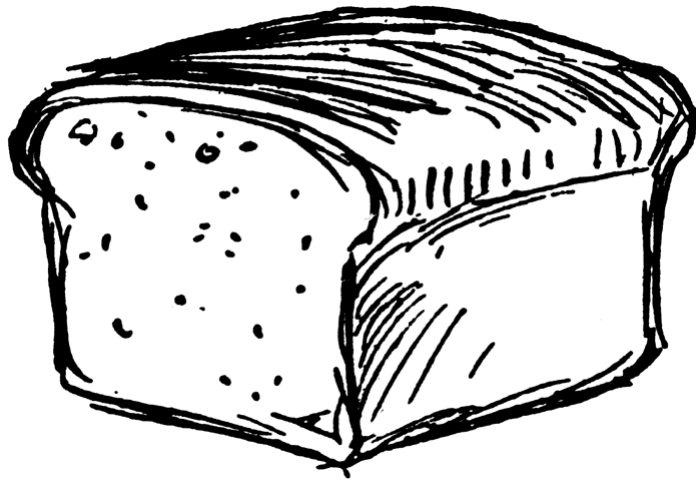
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Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candle. Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

**You hear our voice, loving God at all times,  
You walk with us, Jesus at all times,  
You urge us on, Holy Spirit at all times,  
Loving Presence surround and keep us. Amen.**

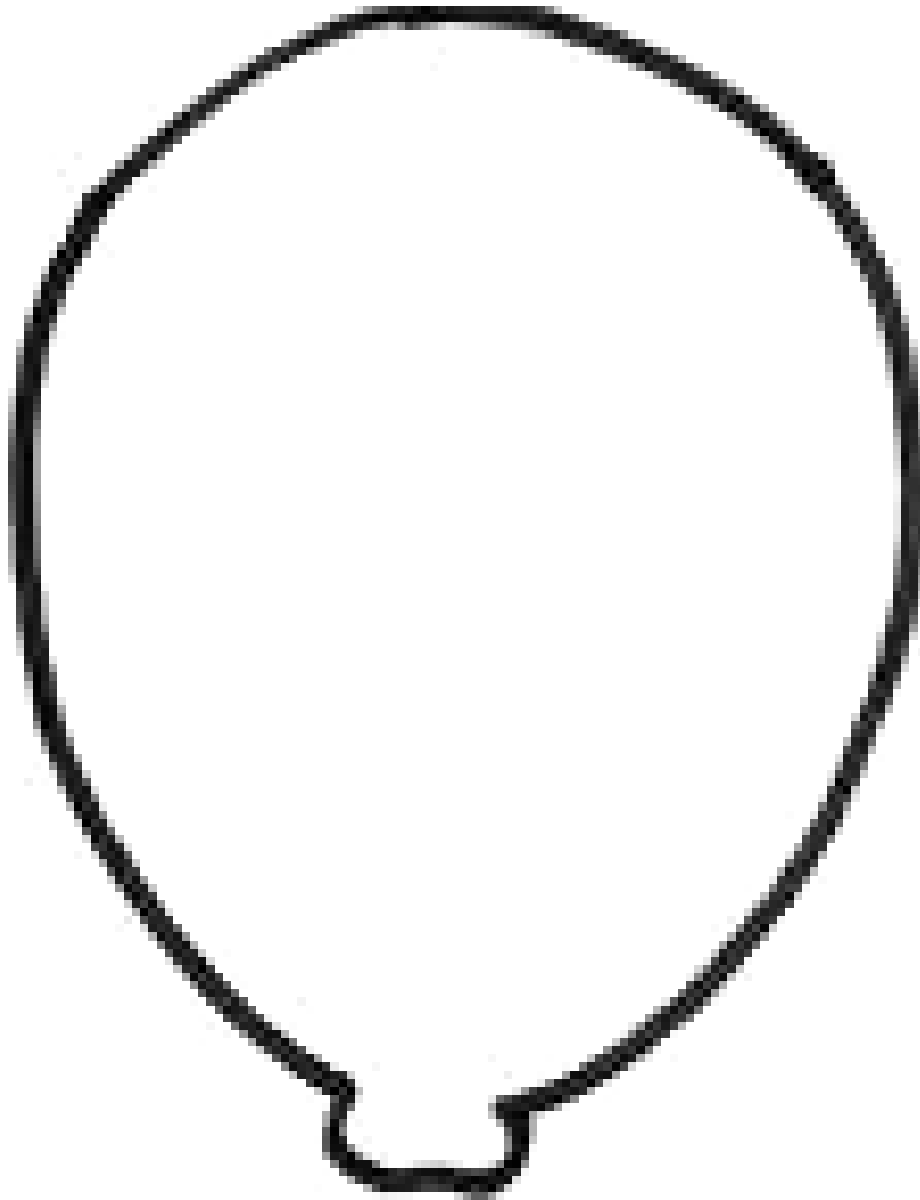
## Bread Shape

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## Balloon Shape

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## Forgiveness Coupons

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<p><b>I am sorry. Please forgive me.</b></p>	<p><b>I am sorry. Please forgive me.</b></p>
<p><b>I am sorry. Please forgive me.</b></p>	<p><b>I am sorry. Please forgive me.</b></p>
<p><b>I am sorry. Please forgive me.</b></p>	<p><b>I am sorry. Please forgive me.</b></p>
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