

CHRIST

be my

Leader



CHAPEL TALKS FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOLS
2009-10

Christ Be My Leader

Chapel Talks for Lutheran Schools 2009 – 2010

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Christ Be My Leader
Chapel Talks for Lutheran Schools
2009 – 2010

Dear Chapel Leader:

Do you realize what an important task you have accepted as you prepare a chapel talk for your school family? You are not alone as you prepare. God is with you. He is your Helper and Friend. Ask Him to speak through you as you present His Holy Word and what it means to children, teachers, helpers, and visitors in your chapel services.

You'll find suggested chapel messages for each week of the new school year in this booklet. They are original talks, written by educators and pastors who serve Lutheran schools and who have experience leading school chapel services.

You may find the following helpful as you prepare for children's chapel services:

- Pray for the Spirit to speak through your words.
- Review the outline for the chapel service.
- Consider the season of the church year, the holiday, or special observance that may fall during that week.
- Gather material or find suitable substitutes for the visual element.
- Personalize and expand the outline to meet the needs of the students.
- Be sure to read and/or retell the Bible readings.
- Choose an order of service. *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)* and *All God's People Sing! (AGPS)* are the suggested resources for hymns, songs, and orders of service.
- Select your vocabulary with the children's various developmental levels in mind. Define words that children may not know, especially if they do not come from a religious background.
- Pray for God's guidance and direction as you lead the chapel service. Ask God to help you speak to each child and teacher's heart.

William D. Cochran
Director of Lutheran Schools
District and Congregational Services
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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Week of August 30

Christ Be My Leader as I Think about the New School Year

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17

Text: Jeremiah 29:11

Song: LSB 922, AGPS 102 "Go My Children with My Blessing"

Visual: Calendar (or lesson plan book) with pages for all the weeks or months in the school year

Introduction

How many days left until the last day of school? (Some students—or teachers—may know!) I'm not sure of the exact number, but it's this many. (Shuffle through the calendar or plan book.); a copy of the prayer used in #4 below for each teacher (prearrange this)

Outline

1. We have a long year ahead of us. But we'll make it through the year, and when it ends, we'll all know more than we know now. Most important, we'll hear more and more about how God loved the world so much that He sent Jesus to take away our sins.
2. Sins? Are you sinful? Yes, all of us are sinners. And though it's very early in the school year, I think all of you already know what we can do with our sins. (Invite responses. If the term *repentance* isn't used, familiarize students with it.) Sadly, throughout the year, we'll be sinning a lot, so we'll be repenting a lot, and we'll be forgiven just as many times. This is God's gift to us.
3. When I think of the new school year, I pray that many good things happen here at _____ Lutheran School. You will get to know each other better; while you won't all be BFFs (Best Friends Forever), you'll grow to love each other, just as Jesus loved you. You'll grow to love each other even though someone may hurt your feelings or do something wrong against you. Do you know why? That's exactly the example Jesus set for you and I when He died for the sins that we do.
4. When I think of the new school year, I thank God. I thank God that I am able to work with you. Your teachers thank God for you too. Did you know that? In fact, we will pray for you right now. (Teachers, pastor, staff stand and read a scripted prayer in unison. Personalize this prayer for your student body.)

Conclusion

We love you here at _____ Lutheran School. We'll not always do what you want us to do, but we will take care of you, because we teach you in the name of Jesus. He loved us, and we love you. When I think of the new school year, I'm happy to be with you, so we can share God's good news with each other as we learn in all our subjects what God has done and is doing.

Prayer

Thank You, dear Jesus for taking away our sins. Thank You, dear God, for being with us always. Thank You, dear Holy Spirit, for giving us faith. Please lead us through the school year. Amen.

EG

Week of September 6

Christ Be My Leader as I Learn and Grow

Scripture: Luke 10:38-42

Text: Luke 11:28

Song: LSB 712, AGPS 207 "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God"

Visual: Teacher or student collections such as rocks, coins, dolls, building blocks, or baseball cards

Introduction

I have a special collection that I brought in to share with you today. This is something that I have treasured for years. (Using a show-n-tell approach share your item, or you can allow several students to show their collections.) As you can see, I know an amazing amount of information about this special collection.

Outline

1. When we treasure something such as a special collection, we work to know everything about it. If someone asks me about my (insert collection), I can tell them where I got it and small details that most people do not know. I have learned everything I can about this treasure.
2. In the Bible story about Mary and Martha, Mary knew that what Jesus was teaching her was something to be treasured. She wanted to learn everything there was to know about Jesus and what He had to teach her. God has given us a special treasure in His Word. He wants us to treasure this and realize how very special it is. This year as we are learning and growing in God's Word, we do not just want to hear the Word but we also want to treasure it. (Insert the text.) We need to learn everything we can. The Holy Spirit working in our hearts can help us do this.
3. I love to share my collection with my family and friends because it is so special. Jesus, and what He did for me on the cross, is even more important and more of a treasure. I want to share this with everyone I know. I want to tell them about the Father who loves me and provides for me. I want to share about Jesus who came to Earth and died for me and rose again so I can have new life. Sharing with others about the Holy Spirit who lives in me and guides me every day becomes most important. I want to share the important news of my faith with everyone I meet.
4. I eventually outgrew my (insert collection) that I had when I was a child. I love to pull it out and look at it, but it is no longer as important to me as it used to be. The great news is that you will never outgrow the word of God or what He did for you. It will be a treasure to you for the rest of your life and into eternity.

Conclusion

This year as you learn and grow, listen to what your teacher has to say. Pray and ask God to help you see what He wants you to learn. Study the Bible, and ask questions. God will bless you with much growth.

Prayer

Thank You Jesus for giving us such a wonderful treasure. Help us want more of You each day as we grow in You this year. Amen.

CM

Week of September 13

Christ Be My Leader in Conflict and Strife

Scripture: Acts 16:22–34

Text: Romans 8:28

Song: LSB 729, AGPS 126 "I Am Trusting Thee Lord Jesus"

Visual: A copy of the chapel outline stained with coffee, or an object that was ruined with water

Introduction

I was really frustrated this morning when I got up and saw that my chapel outline (or supplies) had been ruined with coffee (water). What was I going to do? This was a major problem for me. As I sat down to pray, I suddenly knew what I needed to do this morning, and it all made sense. God had a plan that was better than what I had planned.

Outline

1. Many of us have pains or problems. It can be small things like grabbing the wrong lunch from the counter at home or forgetting to do our homework. It can also be more major problems like a broken arm, parents' divorce, or grandpa being sick and in the hospital.
2. In our Bible story, (See the scripture lesson.) Paul and Silas had a major problem. They were in prison, and it looked grim. They had been beaten and now they were in the inner cell with their feet fastened in stocks. They could have been sitting there complaining about their problems, but instead they were praying and worshipping God. We can learn a valuable lesson from Paul and Silas. Even in the middle of a major problem, they thought about seeing Jesus and helping others to see Him. Notice that the other prisoners were listening to them.
3. After the earthquake, they could have rushed out the door to save themselves, but again, God's word teaches us a valuable lesson. They stayed to see what God wanted them to do. They looked for the good that God would make happen out of the bad situation. They knew what Paul later wrote in Romans 8:28.
4. They kept their focus on Jesus through their difficult time, and God worked through them to do the miracle of the jailor's family coming to know Jesus. He and his entire family learned of the love the Father had for them by sending Jesus.

Conclusion

This morning I was reminded that Jesus will be with me when I have problems. Even with a spoiled outline (object), He was able to use it for His good and to remind me of that fact. As you have problems, remember that not just some, but all things work together for good because He loves us.

Prayer

Thank You Jesus for being with us in all our problems in life. Continue to help us keep our focus on You. Amen.

CM

Week of September 20

Christ Be My Leader as I Receive and Give Forgiveness

Scripture: Matthew 18:21–33

Text: Colossians 3:13

Song: LSB 843, AGPS 96 "Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive"

Visual: A cupcake with a lot of frosting and enough candy or preferred treat to give each student one piece at the end of chapel; advanced preparation and personalized script for the activities below

Introduction

Show the students a cupcake that you are holding. Tell them that the principal asked you to hold it for him until he could give it as a surprise later to the secretary. Then proceed to be tempted by it. (Sniffing the frosting, running your finger around the edge and finally licking off some of the frosting.) The principal then enters and finds you with frosting on your face. The principal is upset but finally chooses to forgive you. After he leaves, you ask a student for the penny you gave him before chapel to use as your object lesson. (Prep this student prior to chapel to pretend losing the penny.) Be upset with the student's "carelessness".

Outline

1. Let's see, eating the cupcake or losing the penny, which should have been a bigger problem. I think today's Bible story (Insert the scripture lesson.) has a lot to say about this. Listen closely, and see if you can tell me what God would have us learn about forgiveness.
2. Our sins deserve punishment—huge punishment. (You may want to make sure your younger students understand that they have sinned.) Think about some of your sins. If I started a list of my sins, it would be really long.
3. Even though God knew we were sinners, He came and died for us. He took every one of our sins on the cross with Him, and He forgave them. That is the Good News. He died for us. Even if I was the only person who sinned, He would have died just for me.
4. It makes me realize that the things that people do that offend me are rather small compared to the huge list of my sins toward God. Because of His great love for me, He forgave me. I so want to show my love to Jesus that I want to forgive others, even when they do things that annoy me.

Conclusion

It is important to remember that forgiveness is "for giving" to others. Just like the sweet icing on the cupcake, forgiveness is even sweeter. Today on the way out of chapel you will receive a small treat to remind you of the sweetness of God's forgiveness.

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for loving and forgiving us. Help us to become more like You, as we love and forgive others. Amen.

CM

Week of September 27

Christ Be My Leader in Loving and Serving Others

Scripture: Genesis 37:12–28; 50:15–21 **Text:** 1 John 3:1

Song: LSB 725, AGPS 80 "Children of the Heavenly Father"

Visual: A cell phone and a poster board or PowerPoint® slide with the text "U R Loved"

Introduction

Last night I was thinking about my son, and so I decided to text him. (Hold up your cell phone.) He had made me really proud, and I wanted to let him know how I felt. This is the text I sent him. (Hold up the poster board or have the PowerPoint slide displayed.) U R Loved—I wanted to share my feelings with him.

Outline

1. Wouldn't it be wonderful if God could text us? What do you think He would say? God does text us through his text, the Word of God. The Bible is His way of sending messages. In 1 John 3:1 (Read text.) He tells us that He loves us so much that He calls us His children. That is truly what we are. He is texting to us and saying, U R Loved.
2. God was texting to us long before there was texting, even before cell phones. He desired us to know how much He loved us from the very beginning of the world.
3. God wants us to communicate this message to our family and friends. Sometimes it is hard to communicate the message that U R Loved because they have done many things to hurt us. In Genesis 37, we learn about Joseph and all the mean things his brothers did to him. (Paraphrase the story for the students.) Later in Genesis 50, Joseph had a chance to get even with his brothers, but listen to what he did. (Insert scripture lesson.) He communicated to his brothers the message, U R Loved.
4. So how can we communicate the text message to our families and friends, even during difficult times? Let's look at Joseph again in the "text" to get some help. Not only did he care for them, (Notice that he cried.) but he forgave them. He provided for them and spoke kindly to them. In our families and with our friends, we can tell them that we love them and that God loves them. And we can show them our love by our actions and by what we say.

Conclusion

God sent us a living text message in his Son, Jesus. He wants us to know how much He loves us. When we look one last time at Joseph, we notice that he wanted to share this love because he knew the love the Father had for him. Joseph knew that He could use what God made good in his life to touch many others. Pray that God will use you in the same way.

Prayer

God, thank You for loving me so very much. Thanks for making me Your child. Give me strength to share this love with others. Amen.

CM

Week of October 4

Christ Be My Leader in the Making and Keeping of Friends

Scripture: John 13:1-15

Text: John 15:12-15

Song: LSB 857 "Lord Help Us Walk Your Servant Way"; AGPS 72 "Beloved Let Us Love One Another"

Visual: A large cardboard "Friendship Heart" (search "friendship heart pendant" in www.goodsearch.com images); a large poster with "BFF" on it, Bible

Introduction

Hold up one-half of the friendship heart and ask, "If I would wear this, who would you expect to wear this? (Hold up other half.)" Yes, my best friend would wear it (Name your best friend. Could even be your dog.) Hold up poster. Ask, "What does 'BFF' mean? Does it mean Bees Fill Flowers? Boys Find Fun? Blue Finches Fly? Best Friends Forever?"

Outline

1. Yes, *BFF* means *Best Friends Forever*. When you send a message to your best friend, you might end it with *BFF* and not even have to sign your name, for your best friend will know that it came from you, as you would from your BFF. We all like friends. We want to be friends with everyone, but it is a special thing to have a BFF.
2. What makes a BFF? Is it someone you can share all of your secrets with and now they will be safe? Is it someone who likes what you do, enjoys the same food, hobbies, interests? Is it someone who will never, ever tell your parents when you get in trouble at school? Is it someone that gives you presents, shares things with you? Will a BFF take a punishment for you – stay in for recess, take a time-out?
3. Sometimes it happens: your BFF becomes a BFF with someone else. Maybe a new person moves into the neighborhood or comes to school. Maybe you have to change schools. Maybe you have to move. Sometimes BFFs grow apart. Sometimes BFFs get mad at each other and really, really hurt one another. Sometimes even adult BFFs hurt each other so much that they will never talk to each other again. That is sad.

Conclusion

There may be a time when your BFF hurts you, moves, or finds another BFF. You will feel alone, sad, angry, hurt, disappointed because you lost your BFF and you want a new BFF. Ah, but you do have a Best Friend, who is Forever! His name is Jesus! He even tells us, "You are my friends. . ." How cool is that! The really cool thing is that He died on the cross for us so that He is a BFF with each one of us. He knows us so well that He was there when we were just a tiny baby and will be there when we are old. Our BFF will never hurt us, move, or find another "BFF." He will be there for us forever. Our BFF wants us to treat those around us just as He treats us with kindness, respect, honesty, and love. He wants us to be BFF with all those around us.

Prayer

Thank You, Jesus, for being our BFF. Help us to be BFF with those around us, always helping and treating them with kindness, just like we want to be treated. Amen.

RC

Christ Be My Leader in Age as in Youth

Scripture: Luke 2:22–38

Text: Jeremiah 31:11–13

Song: LSB 733 "O God, Our Help"; AGPS 164 "Listen, You Nations of the World"

Visual: A kernel of corn, a cob of corn, pictures of a kitten, cat, colt, horse, human baby, and an adult (better if it is yours)

Introduction

Hold up the kernel of corn and ask, "If I plant this seed, what will it grow into? Yes, a cob of corn!" Hold up each picture in turn and ask, "What will this grow up to be? Yes, a cat, a horse, and a very handsome/beautiful person!"

Outline

1. Will a corn seed grow into a cat? A colt into a cob of corn? A baby into a tree? No, that would be silly. A tree seed makes a tree, a vegetable seed a vegetable, a baby monkey an adult monkey, and so on. You can be certain that when you go to the farm or the zoo and see baby pigs, they will grow up to be _____ Yes, pigs! If you see chicken eggs, they will grow up to be _____ Yes, breakfast – no, just kidding – Chickens! Yes, baby anythings grow up to be adult anythings!
2. If you look at young children, can you tell what they will look like when they are older? Sometimes people will change their hair color or get ear rings, but most of the time you can tell baby pictures by looking at the adult.
3. This is especially true when you look at the "inside" of people—no, not the guts or stomach or brains—no, that would be "icky"—I mean their characteristics. If you know a child that is polite, what would be the chances that child will grow into a polite adult? If you know an honest child, what are the chances that the child will be an honest adult? If you know a child that trusts Jesus and is kind and is helpful, what kind of adult will that child be? If a child goes to church and Sunday school now, where do you think they will be as an adult? Yes, what we do as a child will often be the way we are as an adult.

Conclusion

You are in the best years of your life. You will learn more, grow more, and develop more in your grade school years than in any other time in your life! That is very exciting. This is the time you can develop great habits—daily prayer, showing kindness, going to church. It can also be hard. For often we are tempted not to be the child that we should be. We are tempted to sin, daily. Sometimes we do things that we know are wrong, but we do them anyway. Does that mean you are doomed as an adult? Absolutely not! The Holy Spirit gives you the power to change your habits, your language, and your life. Jesus has paid the price for all of your sins, and that will never change. He will always love you, no matter if you are little or big.

Prayer

Thank You, Jesus, for being our Savior. Thank you for showing us how we should live. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for giving us the power to turn away from bad habits. Thank You, heavenly Father, for creating us and giving us all of our special gifts. Amen.

RC

Christ Be My Leader in Serving Those with Special Needs

Scripture: Mark 2:1–12

Text: Colossians 3:12

Song: LSB 847 "Christ Our Human Likeness Sharing"; AGPS 174 "Make Me a Servant"

Visual: A crutch or cane, a pair of sunglasses, earplugs, a fingerprint card (may have to make one up), a cross

Introduction

Hold up the crutch or cane and ask, "If I needed one of these, what would be my special need?" Hold up the sunglasses and ask, "If I wore these all the time, what might be my special need?" If I put in these earplugs what special need would I have? Today we are going to talk about people with special needs.

Outline

1. Every day we are surrounded by people who have special needs. Some can't run as fast as others, some can't see as well as others, some can't hear as well as others, some have trouble with reading, some with math, some with sitting still, some with growing, and some with weight. It is interesting that when we look around, we all can end up with something at which we are not good.
2. So what makes a person a person with special needs? (Ask for answers, ending up with, "when they need help.") Yes, a person has special needs when he needs help in doing something. For example, if I needed this crutch, what help would I need? (Carry things, going up stairs, etc.) How would you be able to help? (Carry things, help me up stairs, etc.) If I was blind, what help would I need? If I couldn't hear? What if I couldn't do math very well? What about sitting still?
3. (Hold up the fingerprint card – ask what it is.) Fingerprints are unique – there is only one person in the whole world that has these fingerprints. There never was, nor is now, nor will be another set of fingerprints like these (they are mine) – that makes me very special! What help do I need?

Conclusion

Yes, I am a sinner and I cannot work, buy, or do enough good deeds to earn heaven. There is only one person who can help me in this need—who is it? Yes, (Hold up the cross.) Jesus. He suffered my punishment, He carried my sins, and He helps me in my special need. He helps you, too. He knows each one of you—by name, by fingerprint. You are so special to Him that He died for you! When we see someone with a special need, we can remember how Jesus helped us and we can help them—carry their burden, help them understand, forgive them, be a friend, be kind to them, and remember that they are just as special as you are—to Jesus.

Prayer

Thank You, Jesus, for paying the price for our sins. Thank You for helping in our special need. We ask that You would help us show kindness to all—even those who are different from us. Help us to be a friend to all, remembering that You are a Friend to all. Amen.

RC

Week of October 25 (Reformation)

Christ Be My Leader as I Stand Firm in the Faith

Scripture: Daniel 3:13–28 **Text:** Romans 5:1–2
Song: LSB 656, AGPS 50 "A Mighty Fortress"
Visual: A large Bible, 4 name tags, a platform (stage, chancel)

Introduction

Call three helpers up front and have them wear a name tag (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego). You will retell the story of the three men in the fiery furnace. As you retell the story, have the congregation participate by a loud "Boo" every time you say "King," "Yeah" when you say "God," and "Dot-da-dah-dah" every time you say "music."

Outline

1. Once upon a time, the men called Shadrach (bows), Meshach (bows), and Abednego (bows) worshipped God. The king passed a law that every time the music played all people must bow down and worship the king. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow down to the king when the music was played; instead they stood up and worshipped God. The king was angry and had them brought before him. He said, "Worship me when the music plays or be thrown into the fiery furnace." They said, "Nope, we worship God and we will stand!" (Have them stand on the platform. They stay.)
2. Call another helper forward and put the name tag *Martin* on him (give him the Bible). Over 487 years ago Martin Luther (bows) was told that the way to heaven was to earn it by good works, that people could pay money for forgiveness of sins (indulgences). Luther wrote about how these practices were wrong. He finally nailed his 95 Theses to the church door to debate. The rulers read them and said to Martin Luther, "Take back what you said, or we will punish you." Luther told them, "No, *Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me.*" (He stands with the others.)
3. (Point to the four.) These heroes stood firm in the faith in God. They refused to bow down to idols or give in to false belief, and so were threatened. Because they stood firm in their faith in God, others learned how God sent Jesus to take away the sins of the world. Let's thank them (Applaud. Then, have them take their seats).

Conclusion

Today there are no kings that make us bow down to idols, there are no rulers asking for money to pay for sins. But there are many ways we are tempted to disobey God. We are tempted to hurt people with our words, use bad language, cheat on tests, disobey our parents, visit Web sites we shouldn't, and stay away from church and Sunday school. When we are tempted we can remember the three men and Martin Luther and stand firm in the faith and not to give in to temptation. The Holy Spirit gives us His power to stand firm.

Prayer

Thank You, Jesus, for paying the price for our sins so we don't have to. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for the power to stand firm in our faith in God, even when people want us to turn away from You. We ask that we will always stand firm in our faith, confident we did not earn it, but by grace it was given to us. Amen.

RC

Week of November 1

Christ Be My Leader as I Honor and Obey Leaders

Scripture: Luke 20:20–26

Text: 1 Timothy 2:1–2

Song: LSB 965, AGPS 106 “God Bless Our Native Land”

Visual: A two-sided sign, with one side that reads, “Vote for Me” and the other side, “Pray for Me.”

Introduction

(Hold up the sign so students see “Vote for Me.”) Have you ever seen a sign like this? Can you name some people who hope to win the most votes in [name current] election? (Invite students to name local and national politicians who hope to win.) Many people support and campaign for their favorite candidates. The supporters work hard to see that their candidate wins. Have you ever wondered what God intends His children to do **after** the elections are over?

Outline

1. (Hold up the sign to show “Pray for Me.”) God has blessed us with the privilege of living in a wonderful country, where we are free to vote for those in authority over us. God wants us to honor and pray for our country’s leaders.
2. It’s easy to honor and pray for the candidates we supported in the election, but sometimes it can be difficult to prayerfully respect officials who do not hold our same views. We might be tempted to dishonor or complain when officials do things we oppose. We need help—God’s help.
3. It’s good to remember that Jesus lived during tough political times. He demonstrated a quiet and determined strength as He obeyed those in authority. Jesus, our leader, will help us do the same. He gives us courage to stand up for our beliefs and voice our concerns, while still remaining respectful. The Holy Spirit enables us to genuinely pray for our leaders—that they have godly wisdom and act honorably as they govern.

Conclusion

God helps us honor and obey our leaders. He will help us remember to pray for those who lead.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, help elected officials govern honorably, and give us strength to support and obey them. In Your name we pray. Amen.

GM

Week of November 8

Christ Be My Leader in Honesty and Trustworthiness

Scripture: 1 Kings 3:5–15

Text: Psalm 47:6–8

Song: *LSB 707, AGPS 191* "Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways"

Visual: Compass, map, water bottle

Introduction

I'm ready to lead my first group of explorers through the Himalaya Mountains. I've got my compass. (Act confused about how to read it.) I've also got a map. (Flourish and turn it several ways as if attempting to figure out which way is up.) Finally, I have a water bottle. I'm thinking about filling it with hot cocoa because I've heard it can be cold in the Himalayas. Now, who would like to sign up to follow me on this expedition? No one? Why not? If I told you I've been a previous guide on this expedition, would you believe me? (Let students point out your lack of honesty, experience, and ability. You simply cannot be trusted to lead this trip.)

Outline

1. It would be foolish to follow a dishonest guide. Yet sometimes we do just that. Satan is the king of dishonesty. The Bible calls him the "father of lies." The devil constantly lies to us with whispers like, "No one will see you take it." "You will have lots of friends if you do it." "Go ahead and hurt them. They deserve it because they hurt you!"
2. Many times we believe Satan's lies and act on them. We sin. Our sins hurt people around us and hurt us, too. We need forgiveness. No matter what we've said or done that's wrong, Jesus is ready to forgive us. He died for our lies, half-truths, and dishonest dealings against our friends and family. He paid for all of our sins—completely—on His cross.
3. Jesus also stands ready to help us. He will guide us to recognize Satan's lies. Jesus will give us strength to follow Him. He will give us the power we need to act honestly and become more and more trustworthy.

Conclusion

We can depend on Jesus for full forgiveness. Jesus will help us overcome temptations and follow Him—our trustworthy Leader.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, we confess that we sometimes give in to temptation. Forgive us. Help us recognize and overcome Satan's lies as we live confidently for You. Amen.

GM

Week of November 15

Christ Be My Leader as I Learn to Share with Others

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10 **Text:** Romans 12:12-13
Song: LSB 789, AGPS 197 "Praise and Thanksgiving"
Visual: Two blankets

Introduction

I have a riddle for you: When can one blanket warm you better than two? When you give one away. The riddle may seem silly, but it's true! When we give a blanket to someone in need, God "warms" our hearts through that act of generosity.

Outline

1. Can you name things other than blankets that people sometimes need to keep warm? How can people with no money get these things? Where does a food bank or homeless shelter get supplies and money to help others? How can we help?
2. The sad truth is that sometimes we are afraid to share. "What if the night is very cold? What if I need two blankets?" Sometimes we fail to share with others because we are selfish. "Let them get their own blanket. These belong to me!" We can ask God to forgive us. He will, for Jesus' sake. The Holy Spirit will help us better trust that God will give us what we need.
3. It's good to share physical items with people in need, but it's even more important to share the Gospel message of Jesus, our Savior. While everyone needs clothing, food, and shelter to survive, everyone also needs Jesus! Our Savior gives us forgiveness, strength, and joy in this life, and eternal life in heaven, too! There's nothing more important that we can share.
4. If your school is collecting items for the less fortunate, challenge students to think about ways to share Christ along with the physical donations. (Perhaps younger students can put faith-sharing stickers on donated canned goods. Older students might write brief faith encouragements to be placed in pockets of donated coats.)

Conclusion

God helps us share the bountiful blessings He's given to us. Most important, He will help us share the Good News that Jesus is our Savior.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, help us gladly share with others. Give us opportunities to share the most important thing—that You lived, died, and came alive again for all. In Your name. Amen.

GM

Week of November 22 (Thanksgiving)

Christ Be My Leader in Offering God My Gratitude and Praise

Scripture: Acts 3:1–12, 16

Text: Psalm 100

Song: LSB 895, AGPS 181 “Now Thank We All Our God”

Visual: Six separate cards, each with one letter in the word: THANKS; six student volunteers to hold the cards

Introduction

Give me a “T.” (Invite congregational response.) Give me an “H.” (Continue in the same way until all the letters are revealed.) What’s that spell? THANKS. Sometimes we forget to say this word. Sometimes we feel too rushed to say *thanks*. But it’s important to thank friends, teachers, family members, and even people we don’t know when they do something for us. Can you tell why? (Volunteers may leave the posters in place and sit down.)

Outline

1. When we verbalize our gratitude, we are telling the other person that we appreciate her words, actions, or gifts. If we never stop to say *thanks*, we may begin to feel entitled or selfish. We might fail to recognize or appreciate the good things others generously give to us.
2. When do we say *thanks* to God? Name physical things God has given to us. When we think about it, really **all** good things come from God, our loving Father. He gives us everything we need to live—and has even given us life itself! If we began to list all of the things from God for which we are thankful, we would never stop. Think about the blue sky, a friend’s smile, warm clothes...the list is endless.
3. At the top of our “Thanks to God” list would have to be His sending Jesus to be our Savior. Jesus deserves all of our thanks and praise for forgiving our selfishness, along with all of our other sins.
4. Christ can give us genuinely thankful hearts, and what’s more, the Holy Spirit may help others see our thankful attitudes and be drawn to Christ through them.

Conclusion

God deserves our thanks and praise. We can gratefully worship our Lord every day, in every place, any time we remember all that He has done for us—especially redeeming us through Jesus.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thanks—for everything. Give us genuinely grateful hearts, and help us express our thanks and praise to You continually as a witness to Your love. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

GM

Week of November 29 (Advent)

Christ Be My Leader as I Ponder Why You Came to Earth

Scripture: Matthew 1:18–23

Text: Philippians 2:5–11

Song: LSB 392, AGPS 109 “God Loves Me Dearly”

Visual: Suitcase with snorkel, book, suntan lotion, knitting needles, and a cross inside

Introduction

When you see a suitcase it usually means someone is taking a trip. Can you tell what people plan to do while on their trip just by looking inside their suitcase? Let’s try it. (One at a time, show an item from the suitcase and let students guess what the item indicates about the traveler’s plans. For example, the suntan lotion may indicate time spent on a beach. Do not reveal the cross until later.)

Outline

1. Advent is the beginning of a trip, of sorts, for Jesus. If we imagined a suitcase for Jesus’ trip we might first imagine some baby clothes. Jesus left His home in heaven, to become a lowly baby—a human, just like you and me. How was Jesus’ life as a human being different from His heavenly life?
2. The imaginary suitcase for Jesus would also include servant’s clothing. Jesus served the sick, the lonely, and many sinful people during His life on Earth.
3. It surely wasn’t a trip any of us would take. Jesus’ life wasn’t restful, relaxing, or carefree. Why did Jesus willingly make the trip from heaven to Earth? (Because He loved us and wanted to save us from our sins.) The ultimate goal for Jesus’ coming to earth was death on a cross. (Reveal the cross in the suitcase.)
4. However, Jesus’ journey did not stop at His grave. On Easter morning, He came alive again! Soon afterward, Jesus returned home to heaven. What a trip! What a Savior!

Conclusion

Jesus willingly gave up His seat of glory in heaven to become one of us. He took our place under God’s law, lived a perfect life, died, and rose again to secure our forgiveness and eternal life. As we prepare for the celebration of Christ’s first coming, we offer thanks and praise to God for His great gift—Jesus!

Prayer

Dear Jesus, during this season of Advent, help us remember how much You loved us, and love us still. Help our faith in You grow continually, as we await our final trip—to our heavenly home—where we will live with You forever. Amen.

GM

Week of December 6

Christ Be My Leader as I Reflect upon the Old Testament Prophecies

Scripture: Isaiah 7:14; 9:2, 6; 11:1; 12:1-2; 15:5 **Text:** Acts 1:10-11
Song: LSB 357, v. 1-2, 4-5, AGPS 186 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
Visual: Large pile of Christmas sale papers from newspapers, magazines, etc.

Introduction

Have you heard this before: "How many times do I have to tell you...?" Who says that to you and why? (Show Christmas sale flyers.) All of these sale papers seem to ask the same thing—How many times do I have to tell you to buy Christmas presents? Like we would forget about Christmas!

Outline

1. In some ways, God's Old Testament prophets liked to say, "How many times do I have to tell you" Who were the Old Testament prophets talking about? Yes, they talked about Jesus. They told God's people over and over that God would send a Savior. The people waited so long for God to send the Savior that sometimes they forgot His promise. But God loved them so much that He didn't let them forget. He repeatedly reminded them.
2. You probably don't need reminders that Christmas is coming. But what reminders do you need about God and your life with Him? (Invite responses.) Sometimes you need reminders about going to church, studying the Bible, repenting (define if necessary), praying, treating others as Jesus treats you, and the like.
3. We need reminders of one more thing. (Read the text.) Jesus is coming back! More than two thousand years have passed since the angels made that promise to Jesus' disciples. Like the Old Testament believers who needed to hear about Jesus coming on the first Christmas, we need to hear that He is coming again. That's what Advent is all about. In the Advent season of the church year, the pastor, the church services, and your Advent devotions remind you that Jesus will come again.

Conclusion

Jesus did exactly as the prophets said He would. He came at the first Christmas. And He came in a way you would not expect God to arrive on Earth. He came as a baby, and He grew up living a humble life. Then He did another unexpected thing: He died on the cross to take away your sins. Then He rose from the dead! But remember this: The next time Jesus comes, He will return in all His glory. And He will take all believers—dead and alive to heaven forever.

Prayer

Thank You for coming to Earth as a baby and for taking away my sins through Your death on the cross. Never let me forget that You will return some day—maybe soon, maybe many years from now—to take me and all believers to heaven. Amen.

EG

Week of December 13

Christ Be My Leader as I Celebrate Jesus' Birth

Scripture: Luke 2:1–20

Text: Galatians 4:4–5

Song: LSB 390 "Let Us All with Gladsome Voice"; AGPS 116 "He Is Born"

Visual: Clock or watch

Introduction

(Read the text.) Last week we heard that prophets told Old Testament believers that God would send a Savior. Few of them ever got to see Jesus, because God waited until just the right time (indicate clock or watch) for Jesus to be born. Let's listen to the story of Jesus coming to Earth. Many of you know it well already, but it's a story we never tire of hearing. (Read Scripture.) God had a God-reason for timing Christ's birth as He did, even though we're not sure what the reason was. (Explain that God, in His mercy, took away the sins of Old Testament people that believed the promise, even though they never saw Jesus.)

Outline

1. What time is it right now? (Indicate time.) For what is it the right time? (Chapel.) Do you think God would mind if chapel were on a different day and time? No, God welcomes worship any time. What is the right time for worship? Anytime!
2. What time do you go to bed? Do you pray before falling asleep? That is the right time for prayer. I go to bed at _____. Is that the right time too? Yes, God always is willing to listen.
3. What is just the right time to forgive others when they sin against us? Is Thursday the official forgiveness day? No, the right time is any time someone sins against us. That can be very hard to do because sometimes others make us angry or hurt us. We do that to others too. And we do it to Jesus every time we sin! Just as Jesus forgives us often and anytime, we can follow His example in the way we forgive others.
4. What is just the right time for Jesus to come again? We just don't know. But God does. And we can trust God to send Jesus at just the right time—God's time. Therefore, we need to be ready to welcome Him any time and all the time. What do you think it means to be ready when Jesus comes again? (Invite responses without immediate comment.)
5. Do you worry about being ready to meet Jesus? I mean, what if you just called your friend a dirty, rotten, miserable, goofy hooplagoofafraglenosesnagglemouth? Will that destroy your chances of going to heaven with Jesus? Hmmm.

Conclusion

Jesus came to take away your sins. He left after dying on the cross and coming back to life. Your sins are gone! Yes, you and I sin every day. And God forgives us as often as we sin. Jesus' work to take away sins was so powerful that our sins are forgiven—even if it's the last thing we are doing when He comes again.

Prayer

Come, Lord Jesus. Come soon. And, while we're waiting, help us get ready for You. Help us to remember Your power of forgiveness. Amen.

EG

Week of January 3 (Epiphany)

Christ Be My Leader as I Remember That Jesus is the Light of the World

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

Text: Isaiah 60:1

Song: LSB 397 "As with Gladness Men of Old"; AGPS 265 v. 1-2, 5 "When Christ's Appearing Was Made Known"

Visual: Several pieces of camping equipment such as a shovel, axe, cooking pot, and flashlight.

Introduction

I have been thinking about camping lately, and I have gathered together some of the equipment I will need. What would I use a shovel for when camping? What would I use an axe for? How about this cooking pot? Is that all I need to camp? What about a flashlight? What would camping be like if I didn't have a light? If you were the only family on a campground with a working flashlight, what would happen?

Outline

1. Jesus is the light of the world. He came to save us from our sins. He came to show us how much the Father loves us. He came to show us how to love each other.
2. Before Jesus came and died and rose again, the world was dark with sin. If we didn't know Jesus and His love for us, we would be stumbling in the dark.
3. Jesus is the light that shows us the way to heaven. The Wise Men traveled a long way to find Jesus. Other people in our world want to hear about Jesus and feel His light too.

Conclusion

We can try to do things without Jesus, but we would not be successful. Just like camping in the dark would be dangerous, we would be lost without Jesus. Because Jesus shows us the way, we can be lights shining for people around us. We want other people to see the light of Jesus. We want others to know what He did for us.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for coming to our dark world and shining the light of Your love on us. Now we can see the way, and we know that the way to heaven is through You. Fill our hearts with joy to share with the people in our lives each day. Amen.

KM

Week of January 10

Christ Be My Leader in Hearing and Sharing the Good News

Scripture: Luke 2: 41-52

Text: Psalm 119:105

Song: *LSB* 908 "Lord, Open Now My Heart to Hear"; *AGPS* 247 "Thy Word is a Lamp"

Visual: Small votive candle, matches, small plate, a glass jar that can cover the candle while it is burning, ¼ cup of water colored with (dark blue or black) food coloring so it can be seen. Set the candle on the plate and light it. Pour the water on the plate around the candle. When you put the jar over the candle (covering the lit candle) the heat of the candle will cause air to escape. When the candle goes out, because of a lack of oxygen, the water will be sucked into the jar.

Introduction

This candle reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world the same way the candles on our altar remind us every time we meet to worship Him. Jesus also tells us that we are the light. The faith God gives us shines as Jesus' love to people in our lives.

Outline

1. Jesus is the light of the world. He came to our world as a baby to live a perfect life and to die a perfect death. His resurrection shows us the way to heaven.
2. Because of Jesus' work, and the faith given to us in our baptism, we shine with the light of Jesus. We shine the Gospel light for other people to see Jesus.
3. Just like the candle needs oxygen to burn we need fuel to shine Jesus' light. If we stop burning the light of the Gospel, then darkness and sin creep in.
4. God helps us fuel our faith through the Word and Sacraments. We are blessed to be able to worship God at church and school and to hear and read His Word every day.

Conclusion

Jesus is the light of the world. God the Father made this clear when He placed a star in the sky to mark the place of Jesus' birth. The wise men followed that star because they wanted to know more about Jesus. We follow Jesus because He made us His children through baptism. When we study God's word we fuel our faith and the light of God shines in us.

Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, We praise You for sending Your Son to Earth as a baby to save us from our sins. We thank You that Your Spirit lives in our hearts, causing our faith to grow. Help us to hear and understand Your Word so we can be Gospel lights. We ask You to keep Your light burning in our hearts. Amen.

KM

Week of January 17 (Life Sunday)

Christ Be My Leader in Speaking for Those Who Cannot Speak for Themselves

Scripture: Exodus 1:8-17; 2:1-1 **Text:** Proverbs 31:8-9
Song: LSB 653, AGPS 135 "In Christ There is No East or West"; AGPS 240 "This is My Commandment"
Visual: A picture of yourself or another staff member as a baby

Introduction

What can you tell me about the baby in this picture? What do you think this baby will be when he grows up? (Invite responses.) You have all given me great responses but I have to confess that this baby is already grown up. Let me tell you about him: *This baby is a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a teacher and a principal.* (Substitute an accurate description for the person in the picture.) Can you guess who this baby is?

Outline

1. God knew this baby before he was born. God loved him and had a plan for his life. It didn't matter to God that he was just a baby who needed someone to take care of him.
2. God has a plan for each of us, and He loves us dearly. God wants what is good for us and works to bring good out of everything in our lives. This special love for us is a perfect love.
3. God asks us to love everyone in this way, even tiny babies. He wants us to care for each other. When we do this we are a part of God's work.
4. God will help us to do that. He made us His child in baptism and He teaches us through His word. He sends His Spirit to live in us and to help us to love each other.

Conclusion

God loves every child. His plans for each child are good, and He wants each child to be loved and cared for. He has made and equipped us to do this ministry. We are blessed to have a God who knows each of us and loves us in this way.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we praise You and thank You for making us Your own through the water and the word. Help us to show love to all of Your children, even as You show great love to us. Amen.

KM

Week of January 24

Christ Be My Leader and Teach Us to Pray

Scripture: Luke 18:9-14

Text: Psalm 17:6

Song: LSB 770, AGPS 261 "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

Visual: Prepare four large cards with the letters A, M, E, N. Ask four children to come up to the front to hold them.

Introduction

Today we are going to play a spelling game. If I put these letters in this order (AMEN) what do they spell? What about the first two letters (AM) what do they spell? I see another word in the second and third letters (ME) what word is that? Now, if I mix up the letters (NAME) can you still read the word?

Outline

1. *AMEN*, is the word we say at the end of our prayers. It is related to the word for *believe*, and when we say it we are putting our trust in God. We believe that God knows what is best for us, and that He knows best when to give us what we need. It is hard to ask for something and then wait for an answer. When we pray we have a chance to practice the faith that God gives us. We know that God is good and that He wants what is good for us. We could also end our prayers with the words: "Truly, truly, God will do it!"
2. *AM* is part of the name God gave Himself when He was talking to Moses in the burning bush. He said "I AM WHO I AM." God is eternal and unchanging. We can go to Him every day in prayer, and He will still love us and care for us. He loves us no matter what we do and no matter what happens to us. There is nothing we can do that will change that love. He deserves our praise and thanks.
3. *ME* is the name for ourselves. Sometimes our prayers are all about ME. They are about what I want God to give me or what I want God to do for me. When we talk about *ME* in our prayers, we should be thinking about our sins. Prayer is a time to confess sin and to know that God forgives us.
4. *NAME* reminds us that God knows each of us by name. He is a big, powerful, almighty God who created everything and gave life. Even though this is true He still knows each of us by name. He listens to us when we pray, because we are His precious children.

Conclusion

Prayer is more than asking God for things. It is a conversation between our heavenly Father and His precious children. We can confess our sins and know that God really forgives us. Then our hearts will be full of thankfulness and praise.

Prayer

God, You are the Great I AM. You are great and powerful, yet You know and love each of Your children. Forgive us our sins, and bring us closer to You each day. Amen.

KM

Week of January 31

Christ Be My Leader as I Remember My Baptism

Scripture: Matthew 3:13-17 **Text:** Acts 2:38-39
Song: LSB 605, AGPS 95 "Father Welcomes All His Children"
Visual: Shell, candle, white garment

Introduction

(Show shell, candle, and white garment.) When might these items be used in a church service? Do you have any of these items from when you were baptized? What else or who else is present at a baptism? (Read text.)

Outline

1. In some families, a special outfit that another family member may have worn is placed on the infant. This is usually white and signifies a new beginning. It also reminds us that we have been clothed with Christ and His righteousness. That is what baptism is! A new beginning in the faith life of the child or adult being baptized.
2. Baptism is certainly a special time in the life of a Christian. God makes us His children on this miraculous day. God's Holy Spirit comes into our hearts to nurture and sustain our new faith.
3. Why do we need baptism? Sin is the answer. We all have been born with sin and without Christ we are lost and an enemy of God.
4. Thanks be to God that through His Son He has set us free from our sins. We are able to live a life where through our actions and behaviors we are examples of Jesus' life. We are able to share with others the Good News of what Jesus has done for us.
5. Think about ways that we are able to serve others. (Ask students to give examples.) (Consider having students bring into the classroom any items from their baptismal day. Design a school bulletin board or banner with baptismal dates.)

Conclusion

Every morning we have the opportunity to remember our baptism. Through the Holy Spirit's help, we can live each day as Christ would want us to. And when we fail, we can confess our sins and know that God forgives us.

Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the gift of baptism. Help us to live our lives' in Your service. Strengthen and preserve us through the Holy Spirit. Amen.

BB

Week of February 14 (Ash Wednesday)

Christ Be My Leader as I Remember Jesus' Atoning Work

Scripture: Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-18 **Text:** 2 Corinthians 5:21

Song: *LSB 571, AGPS 108 "God Loved the World"*

Visual: A stuffed lamb or picture of lamb; a cross, sticky note pad (distribute to children—see below)

Introduction

Lent begins (began) this week. We will spend the next 40 days in reflection of what God has done for us through His Son, Jesus. (Hold up the lamb and cross.) Jesus is the Lamb of God that has taken away our sins by dying on a cross.

Outline

1. (Ask volunteers to write down sins that they have done and stick them on the lamb and cross.) Here are just some of the sins that Jesus had to die for. See how they cover the lamb and the cross. There is not a lamb or cross big enough to carry all the sins for which Jesus had to die on Good Friday.
2. One of the songs often sung during Lent is "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy." It is a simple song with only three verses that repeat. The beginning of this hymn has the words "Lamb of God, pure and holy, who on the cross didst suffer." (As the sticky notes are removed from the lamb and cross have students quietly say or sing these words—*LSB 434*).
3. Our sins may not seem like much, but they carry an expensive price. Jesus had to suffer and die for all people's sins. Our text states, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us." Jesus was the perfect sacrifice because He is God! Only God could do what none of us can!
4. We can spend the next couple of weeks thinking about what Jesus did for us. When we hear the hymn "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy," we remember that Jesus has wiped away all of our sins.

Conclusion

We have time to reflect on the great love that Jesus has for us during Lent. Let us not forget or take for granted the love He has shown us. Thanks be to God that He sent His Son Jesus to suffer in our place.

Prayer

Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to take away my sins. Amen.

BB

Christ Be My Leader When I Am Frightened or Discouraged

Scripture: Matthew 8:23–27 **Text:** Proverbs 14:26
Song: LSB 735, AGPS 115 "Have No Fear, Little Flock"
Visual: Flashlight, newspaper headlines

Introduction

(If possible darken the front section of the area in which you are meeting.) Ask what the children might be afraid of. (After they answer turn on the flashlight and read some of the newspaper headlines.) How do these make you feel?

Outline

1. There are many things that we can be afraid of in this world. Little children are often afraid of the dark. Adults can be afraid of losing their job. In the scripture reading, the disciples were afraid of a sudden storm.
2. Jesus was asleep and the disciples had to wake Him up to calm the storm. Jesus' response was "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Would we have been any different? Our sinful nature causes us to have doubts and fears.
3. Jesus simply got up and told the wind and the waves to calm down. They obeyed Him! As Christians facing our own fears, we can call on Jesus, and He will be with us during our troubles.
4. Sometimes we work ourselves into fearing a situation, such as a test or talking in front of the class. A simple prayer will help us to get through the situation.

Conclusion

Jesus is all powerful and will calm our fears. We know we having a loving God who listens to and answers our prayers. His promises never will fail us.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, when we face our fears help us to be confident in Your protection. Using Your example we can boldly proclaim that You are our Lord and Savior from sin, Satan, and all evil. Amen.

BB

Week of February 28

Christ Be My Leader in Work as in Play

Scripture: Exodus 35:30–34; 36:2–7 **Text:** Colossians 3:17

Song: LSB 783, AGPS 223 “Take My Life and Let It Be”

Visual: Assorted text books and playground equipment

Introduction

(Show books and playground equipment.) If you came to school and had six hours of recess, you might be happy, but what else would happen? (Invite responses.) If you had school all day, with no recess or rest time, what would happen? (Invite responses.) You need to break up work time with a break or with recess. Some fun time away from work actually helps you work and learn better.

Outline

1. Do you ask God to help you study well to get good grades? Do you ask God to help you play? Both work and play are a planned part of your school day. They are part of all of your life. Both are blessings from God!
2. Can work ever produce something bad or evil? Can play ever produce something bad or evil? The devil likes to turn God’s blessings into sin. Sometimes the devil has your help; other times the devil works through others. Sin ruins all good things.
3. Let’s discuss examples of good work. (Invite discussion.) How about work that produces bad or sinful results? (Discuss.) (Conduct similar discussion about play.) We need to know the difference between good and bad, between right and wrong, and between doing God’s will and the devil’s will. That’s not hard to do. We usually know what is right and what is wrong. God made us that way. Sometimes we say that God has written His law in our hearts—so that we know the difference between right and wrong.
4. When you don’t do well with your grades, often it’s because you didn’t study or listen well. Your teachers give you a grade that says you didn’t do well. When you don’t do well in play, friends might not want to play with you.

Conclusion

What happens when you sin? Does God tell you to go away? Does He give you an F? God does not like sin, but God sent Jesus to take away your sins. God forgives you because Jesus lived, died, and rose from the dead—all for you. Does that make you happy? Now you can spend our day in joy—both in work and in play. I hope you have a good time doing both today.

Prayer

Dear God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—thank You for blessing both my work and my play. Help me to do both well. Help me to do well with my classmates and teachers too. Amen.

EG

Week of March 7 (National Lutheran Schools Week)

Christ Be My Leader for a Life of Service

Scripture: Philippians 2:3-8

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:5

Song: LSB 857 "Lord, Help Us Walk Your Servant Way"; AGPS 260 "We Thank You Lord, for Eyes to See"

Visual: Career or jobs section of a newspaper

Introduction

What would you like to do when you grow up? (Solicit several responses.) Let me read some jobs from this newspaper. God has provided so many ways to earn money—and to serve Him at the same time.

Outline

1. Do you need to become a pastor or Lutheran school teacher to serve God while you work? Of course not. Truck drivers and jet pilots, lawyers and mayors, doctors and window washers, letter carriers and computer programmers—all can serve God while they do their work.
2. Have you thought about serving God when you grow up and have a job? The devil doesn't want you to think about such things! The devil wants you to think only of yourself—how much money you can make and what you can do for yourself. The devil doesn't want you to serve other people through your work.
3. You know better. Here at _____ Lutheran School, we've been teaching you how Jesus served you. How did He do that? Yes, Jesus came down from heaven to live a perfect life on Earth, suffer a terrible death, and come back to life. He did all that so you can live with Him forever. Jesus, the Son of God, served you and me—sinners all!
4. Let's think again about some of the jobs we talked about a few minutes ago. How can people in those jobs serve both God and other people? (Discuss.)

Conclusion

God gives us so many blessings! Among those blessings are skills, talents, and abilities to serve other people and, at the same time, serve Him. Whatever honest work you want to do when you get older, be sure to do it in ways that praise Jesus for the work He has done for you.

Prayer

Christ, be my leader as I learn what I need to know to serve You by serving others. Lead me to do good school work now as practice and preparation for what I'll be doing when I'm older. Forgive me when I'm lazy and when I'm working only to serve myself. I want to serve you! Amen. (Include prayers for those in the vocations previously discussed.)

EG

Week of March 14

Christ Be My Leader as I Struggle with Doubt and Uncertainty

Scripture: Judges 6:12–23, 36–40; 7:14–21 **Text:** Psalm 86:15
Song: *LSB* 809 “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”; *AGPS* 58 “All Things Work Out for Good”
Visual: Symbols and signs of leadership: military uniform or hat; police officer’s badge; picture of the seal of the President of the United States; principal’s name plate, etc. Also: several empty jars.

Introduction

(Show some signs and symbols of leadership.) What do these items have in common? (Most of the items remind us of leaders that God has given us.) Which of the items doesn’t seem to belong? (The empty jars) Why not? Today we are going to learn about an unlikely Old Testament leader. Gideon was very uncertain about God’s role for him. God used an unlikely leader and unlikely objects (like jars) to rescue His people.

Outline

1. Review the Bible history of the time of the Judges: The Israelites disobey God; God punishes them for their sin by allowing their enemies to capture or persecute them; the Israelites pray for God’s help; God sends a rescuer—a Judge. The Old Testament Judges were God’s special agents.
2. One Judge was Gideon. He was a farmer. He did not see himself as a leader. God reminded Gideon that it was not his own power that would save the Israelites. God would be with Gideon. To demonstrate God’s power, the enemy was defeated with the blowing of trumpets and the breaking of jars. Imagine winning a battle by breaking jars and blowing trumpets rather than using military weapons! Why did the Gideon and his army win the battle?
3. Do we ever disobey God? (Share examples.) Does God punish us by sending armies against us? Whom has God sent as our Rescuer? Jesus was another leader who came without military weapons or earthly titles. He was the Leader sent from God. He saved us by giving His life for us on the cross. We are reminded of the result of Jesus leadership in Psalm 86:15.
4. In what ways did God make us leaders? (Leaders in the class, on the playground, in our neighborhood, with our brothers and sisters, etc.) Do we sometimes wonder if we have the skill or ability to be God’s leaders? Where do we get our confidence to be Godly leaders? How does God equip us to be His leaders?

Conclusion

We praise God for unlikely leaders like an Old Testament farmer by the name of Gideon and a little boy by the name of Jesus, who grew up in Nazareth.

Prayer

Christ, be my leader! Sometimes I am a selfish leader. Sometimes I am a leader who is not very confident. Forgive me in the name of Jesus. Thank You for the example of Gideon. If it’s Your will, use me to lead others to see Your glory. I pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

BR

Christ Be My Leader When I Find Obstacles in My Way

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:7–10 **Text:** Psalm 33:20–21

Songs: LSB 744, AGPS 63 “Amazing Grace”

Visual: A maze—this could be a large line drawing of a maze on a poster board, or a taped maze or an object maze on the floor.

Introduction

Have you ever tried to draw a line through a maze or to walk through a maze? Is it easy to get from the starting point to the ending point? Why not? Today we will learn how Jesus helps us get through the obstacles of our life.

Outline

1. Review the life of Paul. Paul was living his life in disobedience to God. He was persecuting Christians. He was on his way to Damascus when suddenly God put some obstacles in his path. God blinded Paul. If God would not have stopped him, Paul would have forever been lost in the maze of sin.
2. God has cleared the path to salvation for us. Jesus came into the world. The devil tried to put things in His path to keep Him from going to the cross but nothing could stop Jesus. God removed all obstacles to heaven for us when we were baptized.
3. God put Paul on the path of salvation. Jesus found Paul. Paul repented of his sins. Paul also received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and God put Paul on a path to be a missionary into the world.
4. Satan didn't want Paul to share the Good News of Jesus. Sometimes the obstacles were people who didn't believe and who wanted to hurt Paul. Another obstacle was that Paul experienced pain. He called it a “thorn in the flesh.” But Jesus told Paul that He would always be with Him, “My grace is sufficient for you.”
5. Does the devil try to keep us from serving God? Sometimes other people, maybe even our classmates, friends, or family members, put faith obstacles in our way. Sometimes we too may have pains like Paul that make us question whether God is with us. We also have God's promises that He will be with us. Today's reading from the Psalm says “He is our help and our shield.”

Conclusion

Jesus removed everything that Satan put in the way of His going to the cross. Even the pain of nails in His hands and feet could not keep Him from being our Savior. When we believe in Jesus as our Savior nothing will keep us from heaven.

Prayer

Christ, be my leader through all the mazes of life. When I get confused and lost, help me, Jesus, to go back to Your cross and to start from there again. Give me courage to follow You faithfully, knowing that You are always with me to guide me and strengthen me. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

BR

Week of March 28 (Holy Week)

Christ Be My Leader in Death As in Life

Scripture: Luke 23:39–43

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:55–57

Song: LSB 456 "Were You There?"; AGPS 268 "Who Was the Man"

Visuals: Bottle of iodine, bottle of Bactine®, enough Band-Aids® for every child to receive two. Draw crosses on them. Give them to the teachers or ushers to hand out after chapel.

Introduction

Raise your hand if you are wearing a bandage or have a skinned elbow or knee. (Choose three or four children who volunteered to come to the front.) Now show us your injury and tell us how it happened and what you did about it. (Let each child explain how she got hurt and what first aid measures were taken. Ask, especially, about what medicine or antiseptic was used. Dismiss the volunteers.)

Outline

1. When I was a child and got hurt, my mother (or father) usually used some of this. (Hold up the iodine.) This medicine did a great job of killing germs, but do you know what the problem was? It STUNG! Yes, it burned like crazy. It made me want to not even tell my mother I got hurt, because the cure hurt worse than the injury. Then somebody invented a wonderful thing. (Hold up the Bactine.) It is Bactine, and for some reason, it did not sting when you put it on your sore. The inventor of Bactine figured out how to leave the medicine in and take the sting away. It was wonderful! I didn't have to risk letting my injury get infected because I was afraid to use the medicine. I gladly let my mother put it on my sore. The power to heal was still there, but the sting was gone!
2. That's what Jesus does with the most terrible injury of all. That's what Jesus does with death. Most people don't want to die. Death can be painful. Raise your hand if someone you know or love has died. It hurt, didn't it? Death makes people feel sad and alone and afraid. It's the worst sting we could imagine. That's what the devil wants us to feel. He put the hurt in death, and he doesn't want us to know that death doesn't have to hurt forever.
3. When Jesus died on the cross, He healed us of our sins, and in the process He felt the sting that the devil caused. Now when we die or when someone we love dies, that sting is gone. Now when someone who believes in Jesus dies, we know that person is really still alive in heaven. And heaven doesn't hurt. Jesus heals our sadness, loneliness, and fear. We may miss the person who has died, but we know that person is with Jesus, so we are not sad forever. The hurt is healed.

Conclusion

I am going to give every one of you a bandage today with a cross on it. You can wear the bandage or just carry it with you. When you look at it, I want you to remember that Jesus has taken away the sting of death and healed you from all your sins. Actually, I'm going to give you two bandages with crosses on them. What do you think you can do with the second bandage? Right. You can give it to someone who is feeling the sting of sadness and sin, and let that person know that Jesus is their Savior too.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for taking away the sting of death and sadness by dying for me on the cross. Help me to live with joy, because You are my Savior. Please let me tell others about You, so they can be joyful too. Amen.

CS

Week of April 4 (Easter)

Christ Be My Leader in Celebrating the Joy of Easter

Scripture: Matthew 28:1–7

Text: Romans 6:3–5, 8, 11

Song: LSB 469, AGPS 83 “Christ the Lord is Risen Today”

Visuals: Two brown bags—both containing a bulb or seed; a flower that has grown from a bulb—such as a tulip or daffodil; a package of seeds for each class to plant.

Introduction

I have something in this bag that is dead. Can you guess what it is? The item is (reveal the contents) a bulb. This bulb looks like a rock. It’s brown. It can’t move. It isn’t breathing. It looks boring and useless. It looks dead. (Hold up the second bag.) I have something in this bag that is alive. Can you guess what it is? (Allow a few guesses.) The item I have in this bag is (reveal the contents) a bulb! Yes, it’s the same thing I had in the first bag. Now I’m telling you it is alive. How can something be both dead and alive at the same time?

Outline

1. Although this bulb looks and acts dead, what will happen if I put it in the ground—bury it—and then water it and expose it to sunshine? It will grow into a beautiful living flower. (Hold up the flowering plant.) There was life in the bulb all the time. But what had to happen before the living flower came into being? First, we had to bury the bulb.
2. That is what happened to Jesus’ body when He died on the cross. He was dead—just like this bulb. His friends buried Him on Good Friday, and when they came to look for Him on Easter Sunday they expected to find Him still dead. (Put the bulb back in the bag.) Instead, they saw that He was alive. (Hold up the flower.) Were they ever surprised! What do you say when you are surprised? (Listen to several children give examples, such as, “Wow!” “Hurray!” “Yes!”) That’s probably what Jesus’ disciples and friends said too. Let’s all say “Wow!” together. I’ll say, “Jesus is alive!” and you say, “Wow!” (Do it a couple times, urging the children to capture the excitement of that first Easter.)
3. What Christians have said for thousands of years on Easter, and whenever they talk about Jesus being alive again, is this: One person says, “He is risen.” Then others respond, “He is risen, indeed!”—just like we said, “Wow!” Let’s try that. (Say the sentence and response several times.)
4. Do you know why people were so excited on that first Easter? They were happy that Jesus was alive, and they knew that since Jesus was raised from the dead, they, too, would live forever. That’s why we are excited too. We know that Jesus has the power to raise us from the dead. Even though we may be buried some day, we will really be alive in heaven with Jesus.

Conclusion

I have given each teacher a package of seeds to plant in your classroom. When you see the flowers that grow remember how Jesus rose from the dead on Easter and how you and all believers will live forever in heaven.

Prayer

He is risen! (The children respond, “He is risen, indeed!”)

CS

Week of April 11

Christ Be My Leader in Speaking Words That are Kind and True

Lesson: Acts 9:19b–28

Text: Psalm 19:14

Song: *LSB* 706 "Love in Christ"; *AGPS* 64 "Amigos de Christos"

Visuals: A rectangular table for students to stand behind. Two bowls containing three lemon slices each; two bowls containing three jelly beans each; a box containing kind and unkind sentences written on cards.

Introduction

We're going to play a game called "Eat Your Words." I need two volunteers. (Choose two students. They should be able to handle a little discomfort.) Please stand behind the table. You see that you have two bowls in front of you. One bowl contains lemons, and the other bowl contains jelly beans. You are going to draw sentences out of this box and read them out loud. Every time you draw a sentence that contains kind or helpful words, you may eat a jelly bean, but every time you draw a sentence that contains mean or bitter words, you must suck on a lemon slice. The first person to eat all the jelly beans wins. Are you ready? Here we go. (The students take turns reading the cards and following through on the consequences. Applaud for the person who finishes the jelly beans first. Give him or her a handful of jelly beans as a prize. Then dismiss them.)

Outline

1. You don't have to raise your hands, but how many of you have ever had somebody say something mean about you or to you? How many of you have said something mean to someone or about somebody else? Those were sour and bitter words. How many of you have had someone say something good about you? How many of you have said something good about someone else? Those words were sweet and pleasant.
2. We have to admit that we have all sinned by hurting others with our words. What did Jesus do when people called Him names and told lies about Him, and even hung Him on a cross? That's right. He forgave them. Those were some of the very sins He died to take away. He ate all the lemons our words deserved.
3. Now Jesus lives in our hearts, and the Holy Spirit is in charge of our tongues. Put-downs and meanness really have no place in us anymore. There is an old saying that says, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." Do you think that saying is true? No, we could change that saying to "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can break my heart." Jesus' heart breaks when He hears one of His children hurting others with their words. I know it is hard to be kind and helpful to everyone, but that is what Jesus did for us. And He gives us the power to do it to others.

Conclusion

From now on, when you are tempted to put somebody else down or gossip about them, think about how bitter those lemons taste and remember, instead, how sweet Jesus' words of acceptance and forgiveness sound. Let His love control your heart and your tongue.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, may the words of my mouth be acceptable to You and helpful to my classmates. Thank You for forgiving me when I hurt others. Please send Your Holy Spirit to make me able to do and say what You want me to. Amen.

CS

Week of April 18

Christ Be My Leader in the Truth about Holy Communion

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 **Text:** 1 John 1:7b–9

Song: *LSB 570, AGPS 149 "Just As I Am"*

Visual: Three cards upon which you have written true and false statements about yourself; one card upon which you have written the words of the text; a piece of communion bread and a communion chalice.

Introduction

We're going to play a game called "Truth or Lie." I'm going to tell you three things about myself. Two will be true; one will be a lie. You have to guess which is which. (Hold up three cards upon which you have written the three statements—two of which are true, and one of which is not true. One statement should be, "I have a mole on my right arm.") Now we are going to vote.

Outline

1. (Read each card and determine which the students think are true.) How will you know for sure which statements were true? Are the statements that got the most votes the ones that were true? The only one who can tell you the truth about me is me! You can guess, but you will never really know until I tell you—and maybe even show you. (Reveal the true and false statements. Roll up your sleeve to reveal the presence or absence of a mole.) Until I showed you my arm, you didn't really know if I have a mole. It's my arm, and I am the one who knows the truth and could show you the truth.
2. Here is another card that has a statement written on it. (Choose a student to come forward and read the card with the Bible verse.) Who is this statement talking about? Who is the One who says He will forgive our sins? Right. It is Jesus Who is making that statement. How can we know if it is the truth? Who would we have to ask? If Jesus says this is true about Himself, He is the One Who can prove it.
3. On the night before He was crucified, Jesus had supper with His disciples. It was actually a holiday meal called the Passover. He told them that from then on they were to celebrate this meal in a very special way. We call it the Lord's Supper. Jesus said the bread they were eating was really also His body, and the wine they were drinking was really also His blood. So from then on, whenever they celebrated the Lord's Supper, they would know for sure that He gave His body and shed His blood to take away their sins.
4. We still celebrate the Lord's Supper. Those who have been instructed in what this means eat bread (hold up bread) and drink wine (hold up chalice) together and at the same time Jesus' real body and real blood are present. He shows us what only He can. He shows us that His forgiveness is real. He tells us the truth, and the Holy Spirit puts faith in our hearts to believe Jesus' words.

Conclusion

Now we know for sure that all of Jesus' words are true. Raise your hand if you believe that Jesus died for you and will take you to heaven some day. Good. Raise your hand if you know someone who doesn't believe Jesus' words? What can you do about that? You can tell your friends what Jesus says, so they can believe in Him, too.

Prayer

Thank You for giving us faith to believe You. Please help us to tell others about You. Amen.

CS

Week of April 25

Christ Be My Leader When Others Hurt Me

Scripture: Luke 15:11-32

Text: Ephesians 4:32

Song: *LSB* 749 "There Is a Balm in Gilead"; *AGPS* 236 "There Is a Name I Love to Hear"

Visual: Box of adhesive bandage strips; pad of sticky notes. (The presenter might have many adhesive strips attached to his/her clothing in many different places.)

Introduction

When a little child gets a small cut or a small bruise what is the first thing they often ask for? (A bandage). Looking at me today you might think that I have had a very difficult morning. I really haven't been in an accident! What I'm trying to do is to cover up all the cuts and bruises of my sin. Will bandages take care of my sin?

Outline

1. Imagine if you were to come home today with bandages all over your body. What would your parents say? In our Bible reading today, we have a boy coming home to his father. He didn't have real bandages all over his body, but his father could tell that his son had been hurt by the world. The things of the world that he thought would make him happy only bruised him.
2. We come to our heavenly Father with all sorts of wounds. Sometimes the things and places that we think will make us happy only end up hurting us and making us feel lonely. Sometimes the unkind words of others hurt us. We say things or do things that hurt our relationships with friends, family, and God.
3. We may try to cover up our sins, but we can never heal ourselves. Our heavenly Father sent Jesus who was wounded for us. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sin, our heavenly Father welcomes us and He gently takes away our hurts. (Perhaps have a student's help to remove the strips.)
4. God takes off our bandages and replaces them with good news. (Replace bandages with sticky notes with good news words: forgiven, free, loved, special, etc. (The leader might put the notes on himself or on a child.) God no longer sees the cuts and bruises of our sin. He sees us as His children.
5. God also asks us to tell others Whose they are. As you leave today I (or the ushers) will give each of you several sticky notes. I invite you to put kind or complimentary words on the note and stick it on desk, locker, book, etc., of a classmate, teacher, custodian, parent, etc. reminding them that God loves them too and that they are special to you.

Conclusion

"God, in Christ, forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32). He has taken away all of your sins. Forgiven, we can give words (and deeds) of Good News to others: "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

Prayer

Thank You, Jesus, for forgiving me. You have healed the hurts of my sin. Take away the hurtful words that come from my mouth. Take me away from places where I might do things that wound others. Help me to follow the leadership of the kind Father in forgiving others for Jesus' sake. Amen.

BR

Week of May 2

Christ Be My Leader in Comforting and Encouraging Others

Scripture: Acts 1:6–11

Text: Isaiah 40:31

Song: LSB 727, AGPS 193 “On Eagles Wings”

Visual: A blanket and/or a picture of Linus—the Peanuts character

Introduction

Do you know who this is? (Hold up picture.) What did he always carry with him? (Hold up blanket after answer is given.) How many of you have or have had a favorite blanket (or blankie)? How did this blanket make you feel, and why was having it so important?

Outline

1. Linus is a character in a comic strip known as *Peanuts*, which was created by a man named Charles Schulz. Linus was best known for carrying his blanket wherever he went. It was his “security” blanket that helped comfort him and made him feel safe. Today there is an organization in the U.S. named after him called Project Linus. This group has given out over two million blankets since 1995 to children who are seriously ill to help bring them some comfort. Organizations such as Project Linus are a great way to show care and comfort to God’s children.
2. Jesus provided comfort and encouragement to His disciples while He was with them on Earth. He also knew that they would need continued support and encouragement to be successful witnesses for Him after He ascended into heaven. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to give them the power to boldly proclaim the good news that we can have eternal life through faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit provided them comfort and encouragement for the difficulties they faced.
3. Troubles, disappointments, and sadness occur in the lives of God’s people. These difficulties may cause God’s children, His believers, to become discouraged and possibly lose faith. God has placed people in our lives that can provide comfort and encouragement through the power of the Holy Spirit. Christian parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends are just some of those whom God has given to provide this support. How can you encourage or be a comfort to others in need? (Elicit responses.)

Conclusion

God knows that sin makes lives very hard and that, at times, we may face troubles and difficulties. Jesus knew that His disciples would need support and encouragement to be His witnesses after He left them and ascended into heaven. He knows that we too need this support. That is why He sends His Holy Spirit. Just as He upholds and builds us up through His Holy Spirit, pray that He would use each of us to be a blessing and encouragement to others.

Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit to comfort and encourage us throughout our lives. Help us to encourage others and build each other up in faith and love for You. Amen.

PP

Week of May 9

Christ Be My Leader in Living a Chaste and Decent Life

Scripture: Genesis 39:1-23 **Text:** Titus 2:11-14
Song: LSB 856, AGPS 159 "Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus"
Visual: Cards with the rating system for movies (or video games)

Introduction

Can anyone tell me what these cards represent? (Hold up cards with a G, PG, PG-13, and R on them) These ratings help us (and our parents) make appropriate choices in the movies we watch. The ratings help us to avoid movies that might contain violence, bad language, or other sinful material. Are there any other types of entertainment that have rating systems? (Video games, television shows.)

Outline

1. As we grow older, we will face many temptations to sin against God. Many of these will come in the forms of listening to, watching, playing, or reading songs, movies, TV shows, video games, Web sites, magazines, and books that contain material that is sinful and not pleasing to God. While the ratings given to these forms of entertainment can be helpful in guiding us to those that are inappropriate for certain ages, it doesn't always help us to avoid them.
2. Sometimes other people, including our friends, might tempt us to watch (listen, read, or play) something that we know is wrong in God's sight. In our Scripture reading, Joseph was tempted to sin by someone he knew (Potiphar's wife), but he resisted her temptations by remembering that he was a child of God.
3. We can't resist these temptations by ourselves. Like Joseph, we need help that comes from being children of God. We have the power to say *no* to these temptations and to live upright and godly lives through Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us and purified us to live as His children. We can then "be eager to do what is good," as Titus says in 2:14.

Conclusion

Living as God's people in a sinful world isn't easy. The temptations to watch, listen to, or read material that isn't God-pleasing are all around us. When we face temptation, we can remember the example of Joseph resisting the temptation of Potiphar's wife. We also have the example of Jesus Himself who resisted the devil's temptations after His baptism. And when we give in to sin, God is ready to hear us confess our sins. He forgives us because Jesus died to take away our sins.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, forgive us for the times we watch or do things that are not pleasing to You. Give us strength through Jesus to live a life that reflects You in all we do. Amen.

PP

Week of May 16

Christ Be My Leader as I Care for the World

Scripture: John 6:8–13

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:31

Song: *LSB* 808, *AGPS* 189 "O Sing to the Lord"

Visual: A list of ten items of ways to preserve and care for God's creation e.g., 1. Recycle, 2. Use CFL light bulbs, etc.)

Introduction

I have made a list of ten ways that we can help to conserve/preserve the world in which God has placed us. Can you guess what my top ten suggestions are? (Have each item covered in a way so that each can be uncovered as students suggest that item.)

Outline

1. When God created the world, it was just as He intended it to be—perfect. We know this because the words "it was very good" are recorded in Genesis 1 at the conclusion of His creation. Sadly, when sin entered into the world through Adam and Eve, His creation was no longer perfect. We can see the results of this through all the problems related to the Earth that we now face.
2. Most of us are aware of these problems and many of them we learn about in our science classes—global warming, polar ice caps melting, pollution and clean air, water shortages, endangered species of plants and animals, etc. These challenges can cause people to become concerned about how this might affect our future.
3. God has placed us in a wonderful world, created perfect but now sin-damaged. He has given us the intelligence and abilities to use it in a variety of ways that help benefit people's lives and give Him glory. Best of all, He sent Jesus to take away our sins. Now He expects us to care for it and to use it wisely even as Adam and Eve did when they tended the Garden of Eden. The scripture reading for today gives us an indication of Jesus Himself being an example by "cleaning up" the leftover food after the feeding of the five thousand.

Conclusion

God has given us Earth and all that it contains as blessings for our life here. He has created a world that responds to our good care of it. He expects us to wisely use the blessings that He has given. In this way we honor and glorify Him for His gifts and help to preserve them for future generations—people who will need to hear of Jesus' love.

Prayer

Most gracious heavenly Father, You have blessed us with a marvelous world in which we live. Forgive us for the times we waste or misuse the gifts You have given us. Help us to be good stewards of Your creation, so that we might wisely use it to Your glory and to the blessing of all people. Amen.

PP

Week of May 23

Christ Be My Leader as I Read and Study God's Word

Scripture: Acts 8:26–39

Text: John 20:31

Song: LSB 833 "Listen, God Is Calling"; AGPS 123 "How Precious Is the Book Divine"

Visual: Your favorite children's book or book and a copy of the Bible

Introduction

Do you have a favorite book? I have mine with me today (Hold up and talk about your book.) What are some of your favorite books? (Elicit responses.) What makes that book your favorite? Have you read it more than once? Have you told others about it or recommended it to others?

Outline

1. I love books and reading. Books can take you on all types of adventures; they can give you information about so many different topics; they can be fun and entertaining; and they can provide mysteries to solve. Some books I've read have been better than others. Some books I've liked, some I haven't. Some have even been on the best-sellers list. There is even one book that I read over and over again. It happens to be the best-selling book of all times with over six billion copies sold since it was first published. Do you know what book I'm referring to? If you are thinking *the Bible*, you're right! (Hold up the Bible.)
2. Of all the books I've ever read, the Bible is the only book that has the power to completely change lives. It is the only book that offers a gift without any strings attached. It is the only book that is one hundred percent true. It is the only book that tells us the way to salvation. That way is through Jesus Christ. Sadly, we might not read or study this book as often as we need to. We often fail to tell others about this wonderful book as well.
3. In our text for today, there was a man referred to as an Ethiopian official. He was reading a book in his chariot on his way home from Jerusalem. The book he was reading was Isaiah, one of the Old Testament prophecy books. God sent one of His believers, Philip, to meet the Ethiopian. God used Philip to explain the words the Ethiopian was reading in Isaiah and to tell him the good news about Jesus. The Ethiopian received the gift of faith, the gift of salvation, and the joy that comes from it.

Conclusion

God's word, the Bible, is the most important book we can own, use, and share. It has the power to change lives as in the story of the Ethiopian official. It is the only book that the Holy spirit uses to offer salvation, as it tells the story of our Savior Jesus Christ! What a wonderful book and story! Pray that God will lead us to read and study it daily and to share our joy of knowing the Good News of God's Word.

Prayer

O almighty God, thank You for the gift of reading. Please forgive us for the many times we neglect to read and study the Bible. Fill us with the desire to read Your word each day and to share the Good News of salvation with others. Amen.

PP

Week of May 30

Christ Be My Leader as I Grow as a Member of Christ's Body, the Church

Scripture: Acts 2:37-47

Text: Ephesians 4:1-7

Song: LSB 644 v. 1,4,5 "The Church's One Foundation"; AGPS 252 "We Are the Church"

Visual: A small building (if possible, in the shape of a church) made out of Legos® or other building blocks

Introduction

How many of you like building things out of Legos or blocks? It's fun to build all kinds of things—buildings, cars, planes—or whatever objects you can imagine! Have any of you ever visited one of the Legoland Discovery Centers? They have some amazing things built out of Legos. I have with me this morning a building I have made out of Legos/blocks that I want to get us thinking about the word *church*.

Outline

1. When people hear the word *church* they often think about the building itself. (Show Lego/block building) Or they might think of what happens in the church building—worship services such as what we are doing now in our chapel service. But the idea of church is more than just a building, as we have heard about in our Bible readings for today.
2. The readings talk about people, specifically believers in Jesus Christ. The Church is people, not just a building. The Church is the body of Christ, forgiven sinners who are united to build one another in the faith and to tell others about the hope and joy of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. Each person in the Church is like the individual blocks or Lego pieces in my building. Each piece is an important part—the building isn't complete unless all the pieces are joined together. People are the Church, and Jesus Christ joins them together as their leader.
3. In the early church, the believers met daily, studying the apostles' teachings, sharing meals and their possessions, worshiping and praising God, and telling others of their faith. God blessed their unity and faithfulness and the number of believers increased.
4. Whenever I hear the word *church*, I am reminded of a little saying and hand motion that I learned when I was in Sunday School: (fingers interlocked inward with the pointer fingers touching pointing up and thumbs crossed over each other) Here is the church, here is the steeple, open the doors and see all God's PEOPLE!

Conclusion

When you hear the word *church*, remember that it is not just a building or a worship service. It is people who believe that Jesus Christ took away their sins. Give thanks to God for other believers. Gather together with them regularly in studying God's Word and in worshiping and praising Him who has redeemed you. And then tell others so that they might experience the same joy you have in knowing Jesus!

Prayer

Dear Jesus, You have made each of us an important part of Your Church. Help us to grow in our knowledge of and love for You and each other, so that we might be good witnesses for You in our world. Amen.

PP

Opening of School Year

Christ Be My Leader in Each Beginning

Scripture: Joshua 1:9; 3:1-5

Text: Matthew 28:20b

Song: LSB 861, AGPS 81 "Christ Be My Leader"

Visual: Make a large sign that says "Grand Opening"; if possible, have a pencil or other small gift for each child; consider having a few larger "door prizes" (if you choose this option, devise a method of picking winners)

Introduction

Aren't you happy that today is the first day of school? Okay, so it's not the greatest day of the year for some of you. If it will make you feel any better, today really is like a—ta-da! (Hold up Grand Opening sign.) And _____ Lutheran School has a small gift for each of you. (If you have "door prizes," explain the process, but select winners at the end of chapel.)

Outline

1. Beginning a new school is an adventure. You know some things will go well, but you also know you'll have some bad days. The reason for bad days is sin—sometimes your own sin, sometimes the sins of others, sometimes sin just happening because it affects—and infects—everything in the world.
2. Do you worry about the new school year? Will you earn good grades? Will you have trouble learning? Will classmates treat you kindly? Will teachers be friendly and fair? You may have lots of questions for which you'll have to wait for an answer.
3. I can promise you one thing about your new year at _____ Lutheran School. Jesus always will be here. He said so long ago. (Read text.) You and I weren't around when Jesus promised His presence, but the Holy Spirit made sure that the words got into the Bible. He wanted all people for all times to know His wonderful, comforting promise.
4. So what good does it do to have Jesus always with us? Well, He IS God. Isn't it good to know that God is here? Some of you don't seem too sure that having God around is so good! Maybe you think He's just waiting around for a chance to smite you or something when you do wrong!
5. The Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is here to bless you and to take care of you. When you do something wrong, God is here to listen to your sorrow over sin—and to forgive you.

Conclusion

Let's celebrate the Grand Opening of a new school year! You are here. God is here. We'll get through the school year together, and we'll remember every day what God did for us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Now Jesus is our leader—right here, right now. Let's sing about it. (Sing "Christ Be My Leader.")

Prayer

Christ, be my leader, every day and every night. Help me to be a good follower. Amen.

EG

Grandparents Day

Christ Be My Leader as I Love My Family

Scripture: 1 John 3:1-3

Text: Proverbs 17:6 and 20:7

Song: LSB 588, AGPS 144 "Jesus Loves Me"

Visual: Crowns for the children. If the group is too large for every child to have a crown, demonstrate with a crown placed on a single child's head (or on several children's heads). You can order crowns from Oriental Trading or a similar entity.

Introduction

Are any of you royal children? Do any of you have the title of *prince* or *princess*? I don't think we have any children with a truly royal heritage in our school. However, I'm sure that to your grandparents you are all very special. They might even say things like "you're a princess."

Outline

1. Even in our grandparents' eyes, not everything we do is special. Sometimes we disobey our parents and our grandparents. Sometimes we tell lies, disappoint them, or maybe even break some things that are special to them. We call the bad things that we do *sin*. Sin causes problems in our own families. Sin makes our heavenly Father disappointed and even angry.
2. Our Bible reading from 1 John tells us that God loved us so much that He sent Jesus to die for our sins. God forgives all our sins. God welcomed us into His family at our Baptism. We are God's children. Since He is the King of everything and since we are part of His family, we are His royal children. In God's eyes, we are all princes and princesses.
3. But right now God is with us and keeps us as His children. He blesses us with many special people in our lives, like our grandparents. (If children have a crown they can now put the crown on a grandparent's head. If children do not have individual crowns, place the crown on the head of one grandparent in the assembly.) In the book of Proverbs, God gives us many wise sayings. God's word says "Grandchildren are the crown of the aged." (Proverbs 17:6) When God placed you in your family, He made you a special blessing to your mother and father and to your grandparents. Having you as their grandchildren is like having a very precious crown on their heads. I'm sure your grandparents would much rather have you than some golden crown.

Conclusion

Grandparents, we have very special children at _____ Lutheran School. We see them as Jesus' sees them now and in eternity: as his royal children. Children, because God has made you His royal representatives we want you to represent Him well in everything you do. We also want you to invite others to be part of this special kingdom. We thank God for all the royal representatives with us today.

Prayer

King Jesus, thank You for family members, especially grandparents, who lead us closer to You. Bring us safely into Your kingdom, where we will be together forever for Jesus' sake. Amen.

BR

Closing of School Year

Christ Be My Leader as I Look to the Future

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:14–17 **Text:** Jeremiah 29:11
Songs: LSB 861, AGPS 81 “Christ Be My Leader”
Visual: A sphere such as a snow globe, bowling ball, etc.

Introduction

(Show sphere.) Do any of you know what a crystal ball is? Some people believe a crystal ball can help them see what will happen in the future. I couldn't find a crystal ball, so I'm using this (name sphere) instead. If I rub it gently and peer deeply into it, maybe I can tell what will happen next month. (Rub and peer deeply.) Hmm. I see that you will soon be on summer vacation. I see that most of you are happy about that. Most of all, I see...(name sphere). This ball really is useless. Even if I had a crystal ball, it would be no better than this (name sphere).

Outline

1. Nobody can say for sure what will happen in the future. I said that you would soon be on vacation and that you would probably enjoy it. But everybody knows that! Sometimes it's easy to guess what will happen.
2. Would you like to know what will happen on July 12? How about when you turn 16? Where you will go to school after high school? Who you might marry and how many kids you will have?
3. You might not like what will happen at all those times. Why? Yes, some bad things might happen. Sin is sure to happen! Sin is what hurts you, frightens you, and tries to divorce you from Jesus' love. Sin is what you sometimes do that hurts yourself and others. Sadly, as long as we live on Earth—or even if you can live in outer space someday—sin will be there too, messing with your life.
4. Would you like to know what will happen on July 12? How about when you turn 16? Where you will go to school after high school? Who you might marry and how many kids you will have?
5. Even though sin will be around, Jesus will be there at all those times. Jesus sacrificed His life to defeat sin. His Holy Spirit is with you to help you fight sin and to keep you faithful to God. And even when you give in to sin, which you will do many times in the future, Jesus sticks with you, forgiving you over and over.

Conclusion

You do not know all the good things and the bad things that will be part of your future. But you can be sure that Jesus is in your future—this summer, next school year, even when you're older than me. God bless your summer and your whole future!

Prayer

Christ, you are my leader. Thank You for taking away my sins and for leading me to faith in You. Lead me into the future, and stay with me always. Amen.

EG



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