

A Good Shepherd Story of Jesus

In Memory of Her

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INTRODUCTION TO LENT--YEAR 2

The season of Lent is another "waiting time". The Good Shepherd program makes it easy for children to see the time pass as they prepare to experience Easter.

The stage is set for Lent by using a series of seven cards. The first six cards are purple with one side showing a blackened silhouette and the seventh card is white with one side showing a blackened silhouette. Each week the cards are removed from the Lent-2 basket and laid out in a straight line to your left with the solid side facing upward. As each week's story is shared, the card is turned over. The first week the purple card with the silhouette symbolizing the story of "Waving Palms" is revealed. The second week that card and the one with the silhouette symbolizing the story of "In Memory Of Her" are revealed. And so on. Each week we begin with card one, asking the children to mentally recall each part of the Lent story, before telling the current week's story.

During the story response time, the children are encouraged to take the Lent-Z basket and the story basket from the shelf and see if they can tell the story each week. By using the Lent cards and the story figures the children look ahead with great anticipation to the joy and wonder of Easter.

Each lesson in the Lent series tells you what story, story figures and Lent cards are to be used. During the "circle of light" be sure to place the appropriate bookmark representing each week's story in the Good Shepherd classroom Bible. This allows the children, non-readers as well as readers, to become familiar with where the Lent stories are found in the Bible.

An optional activity you may want to include at the start of the "circle of light" each week is the use of the church year puzzle. It illustrates the passage of the weeks of Lent as we move toward Easter. This is how you would do it the first week of Lent:

When the children return to the circle for the "circle of light", bring out the church puzzle.

ACTIONS

Hold up the church year puzzle.

Touch the first week of Lent.

Touch each purple piece as you count it.

WORDS

This is the circle of the church year. It helps us see how the time of God's people is divided.

We have just started Lent so we are right here on this first purple piece.

We will wait 1,2,3,4,5,6 weeks for a very special Easter celebration.

At this point begin the "circle of light" as usual. For weeks two through six simply move the markers on the church year puzzle before each circle of light and adapt your words accordingly. On week seven you will be at a white marker and it will be obvious the holy day of Easter has arrived.

During this time called Lent we learn a lot about Jesus, the stories he told and the things he did. We learn about his relationships with his friends and the people who followed him. The message of Lent is heard as we gradually begin to understand that Jesus showed himself to be the Messiah.

MATERIALS USED DURING LENT--YEAR 2

The medium Lent-2 basket on the shelf contains:

- a set of 7 cards are used each week in the following order:
 - a purple card with palm branch silhouette
 - a purple card with bottle silhouette
 - a purple card with man with withered hand silhouette
 - a purple card with table silhouette
 - a purple card with chalice and paten silhouette
 - a purple card with money pouch and coins silhouette
 - a white card with an empty tomb and cross silhouette

The story sets are used in the following order:

- Waving Palms basket
- In Memory Of Her basket
- Jesus Heals On The Sabbath basket
- Jesus Cleanses The Temple basket
- The Last Supper basket
- Judas Betrays Jesus basket
- Crucifixion and Resurrection basket

Items needed from the worship shelf for Lent:

- chalice (for use with the Last Supper basket)*
- paten (for use with the Last Supper basket)*

The church year puzzle used as an optional activity each week during the "circle of light" can be purchased separately from our Good Shepherd Accessories order form.

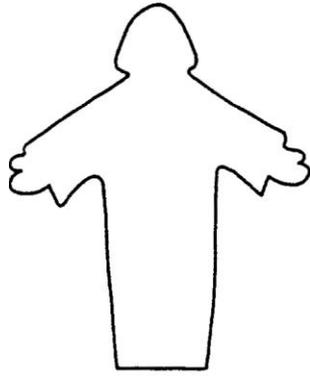
If communion is served during the "circle of light" the week The Last Supper story is presented you will need to purchase bread and grape juice.

* These items are not furnished for you. We recommend their use and hope you can acquire them locally.

IN MEMORY OF HER MATERIALS

- medium wicker basket to hold:
 - wooden figure of Jesus
 - 2 wooden figures of disciples
 - wooden figure of a woman holding a bottle
 - wooden table

- from worship shelf
 - Lent-2 basket containing 7 cards



Jesus



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Disciples

IN MEMORY OF HER MARK 14:3-9

ACTIONS

After speaking, stand and get the Lent-2 basket from the worship shelf. Get the story basket from its shelf. Bring them to the circle and sit down.

Allow 10-15 seconds of silence as you reverently touch the Lent cards or wooden figures to center yourself and the children.

Point to the worship shelf.

Remove the six purple cards from the Lent-2 basket and lay them out with the plain purple side showing in a straight line starting to your outer left.

Remove the white card from the Lent-Z basket and lay it next to the purple card closest to you with the plain white side showing.

Turn the first purple card over so the silhouette of the palm branch shows. Touch it reverently.

Turn the second purple card over so the silhouette of the bottle shows. Touch it reverently.

Place Jesus in the center of the area.

Place a table next to Jesus on the right and put the two disciples around it.

Place the figure of the woman holding a bottle at left center.

WORDS

Watch carefully where I go to get these materials so you will know where to find them if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

All the words to this story are inside of me. Will you will make silence with me so I can find all the words to this story?

The worship cloth is purple and we know we are waiting. This is the second week of Lent.

These are the Lent cards.

They will help us understand the stories we hear during Lent and make us ready for the time we are waiting for ... Easter.

The first week of Lent (last week) we learned about Jesus coming into the city of Jerusalem while the people waved palms.

This second week of Lent we will hear about a woman that Jesus said to remember.

Jesus was in the town of Bethany, in the home of Simon.

He was sitting at a table and some of his disciples were with him.

While he was sitting there a woman came in with an expensive bottle.

Point to the bottle the woman is holding.

Move the woman figure to the right, closer to Jesus. Pantomime lifting a bottle and pouring it over the Jesus figure.

Touch one of the disciple figures.

Turn the disciples to face Jesus. Touch first one disciple and then the other as you speak.

Move the disciples from the table to the left of the woman. Leave a slight space between them.

Place the Jesus figure, facing away from you, between the disciples and the woman.

Nod your head as you speak of the poor people.

Touch the Jesus figure as you speak very softly and sadly.

Turn Jesus to face the disciples on the left.

Spread both hands outward to indicate "the whole world". Pause and gently touch the woman as you finish.

In the bottle was some very precious perfumed oil.

The woman opened the bottle and poured the oil on Jesus, anointing him.

Some of the disciples were angry.

They said, "Why did she waste the oil like this? She could have sold it for a lot of money and we could have given it to the poor people. "

And so they spoke against her.

But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She has done a beautiful thing to me."

Then Jesus said, "There will always be poor people, and you can always do good things for them."

Jesus told his disciples, "She has anointed my body now for the time I will be buried."

Then Jesus gave his disciples a command.

"I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her. "

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

I wonder if the woman was happy or sad when she came in to Jesus?

I wonder why the disciples were so angry with the woman?

I wonder what the woman's name was?

I wonder why her name was not written in the Bible?

Place the wooden figures into the story basket.

Pick up the first two Lent cards and place them in the Lent-Z basket.

Pick up the remaining four purple cards and then pick up the white card and place them in the Lent-Z basket.

After speaking, stand and carry the story basket back to its shelf and the Lent-Z basket back to the worship shelf. Return to the circle.

Be sure ALL children have had a chance to choose their work before dismissing the children.

Watch carefully how I put these materials away so you will know how to use them if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

This is the second week of Lent.

We will wait and make ourselves ready for five more weeks, then it will be Easter.

Watch carefully where I return this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

I wonder what you will make your work today? Let's go around the circle and choose what each of us will do.

IN MEMORY OF HER •... TEACHER HELPS

This story is told in all four gospels with different variations in each. I have chosen to tell the story from Mark 14:3-9, but it is also found in Matthew 26:6-13, Luke 7:36-50 and John 12: 1-8. In Luke, Simon, whose house Jesus is visiting, is a Pharisee as opposed to a leper in the Matthew and Mark account. In John, the anointing occurs in the house of Lazarus. For that

reason I did not identify Simon as a leper as the text in Mark says. I felt it would be better only to call him by name. Also, in both Mark and Matthew it is Jesus' head that is anointed, while in Luke and John it is his feet. While this disparity may cause us some concern, it's probably best to note that the story had to have some reality to be included in all four gospels. (The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible, edited by Charles Laymon, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987, p.666) There is much truth here. The fact that there are differences should be a strength of the story and not a weakness. Just as stories change as we pass them on to other people, so the stories of Jesus would have changed in the thirty or forty years after his death. Each tradition made this story their own, even though some of the details were changed.

This is a particularly important story for women. Jesus reproaches the disciples for bothering or "troubling" the woman. They no doubt were angry at her and probably for more reasons than the one they gave. That the woman had the nerve to come into the place they were eating and approach Jesus was a problem to begin with. The woman should have been in the kitchen or serving the meal. It is also very probable that they were not comfortable with the woman owning such an expensive, imported item. The fact that she kept it in an alabaster jar, not a plain pottery flask, tells us that it was worth quite a bit. The text tells us that the oil was worth 300 denarii, or a laborer's total yearly income. Think of someone taking something the value of a whole year's income and pouring it over another person's body. No wonder the followers of Jesus were chagrined at what this woman did.

In addition, the woman was doing an act that would not have normally been something women did. She was anointing. In the Old Testament this is how a new king was signified. David was anointed by Samuel, while Saul was yet king, to show that David was God's choice. The common translation of this act in the gospels is that the woman was anointing Jesus' body for burial even before his death. Remember that Jesus and his family and friends were Jews. It was very important to them that the body be ritually cleansed and anointed before it was buried. It was for that reason the women returned to the tomb on Easter Sunday morning. This "pre-anointing" may have given some of the followers of Jesus a security after his death and burial, that Jesus' body had been anointed, though in a very untraditional way.

Finally, we have Jesus' words to the disciples. Jesus is not saying that it's OK to leave people in poverty. Jesus is reminding all of us, as well as his disciples, that there are times we are called to worship and adore, and there are times we are called to go out and do for others. Now was the time for this woman to worship and adore. The rest of her life could be spent doing for others.

Who was this woman? That is one of the big mysteries of Mark's text. It is also a point made by feminist theologians. Jesus commands that this story be told wherever the gospel is preached so that what this woman did will be told "in memory of her". Elizabeth Fiorenza in her book In Memory of Her points out that not only is this story seldom told in memory of the woman, but we don't even know for certain who the woman is. Neither Mark nor Matthew identify her. In Luke, she is a forgiven sinner and in John, she is Mary the sister of Lazarus

and Martha. Both boys and girls need to grow up claiming the knowledge of these stories that affirmed the important role that women played in Jesus' life and ministry. The woman who did not belong with the men, who should not have owned such expensive oil, and who had no right to anoint Jesus, needs to be held up and honored as one who understood that Jesus had a place for everyone in his life and that we all are called to worship and adore Jesus.

As we wonder, we begin by wondering if the woman was happy or sad when she came to Jesus. We don't know and the children may lead us in this one. I believe most of them will understand that she was happy, because she got to be with Jesus. Some of the older children may recognize the end of the Lenten journey to be the cross that precedes Easter and they may believe the woman was sad.

When we wonder why the disciples were angry we are questioning at two levels. First, what did the story say? (They were angry because of the wasted money.) Second, we are asking if there was any hidden reason for their anger. Some children may respond that the disciples were jealous that the woman interfered with their time with Jesus.

The last two questions deal with the woman. We wonder what her name was and why it wasn't in the Bible. The children may be stumped on this and you may need to allow them the freedom not to have an answer. Some children will say that people just forgot her name, while others may say that Jesus didn't know her name. The answers are not as important as the fact that the questions have been asked and are now a part of the child's wondering about the story.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

The woman in the story is not identified. What might be some reasons that she is not named? How do you think the disciples felt about her? How do you think Jesus felt about her?

In the story the woman anointed Jesus. This was usually done to show that someone was a special person, like a king or ruler. Jews also anointed the body of a person who died before they buried him. Which of these things do you think might have been the reason for the woman to anoint Jesus? Might there have been any other reasons?

The disciples felt the money spent on Jesus could be better used to feed poor people. Would it be better for us to sell our large building and meet in a school gym or build a less expensive building so we could give the money to poor people? Why or why not?