

C+G
Education

RCL

LIVING THE WORD

**Cross+Generational
Education
Years A & B**



Leader's Guide

Sample Lesson

September 10, 2023

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September 10, 2023
15th Sunday after Pentecost
Year A

Sin in the Church

Gospel Reading: Matthew 18:15-20

First Reading:

Exodus 12:1-14

Second Reading:

Romans 13:8-14

Key Verse:

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

– Matthew 18:20

The Point:

We should neither ignore the harmful actions of others nor shame them but seek reconciliation.

Liturgical Color:

Green



Activities & Supplies

Into the Word

One or Two

Talk about working together.

10 min.

- Groupings Guide
- Materials for chosen cross+generational grouping
- White board or mural paper
- Markers
- Paper
- Pens or pencils

Seasons of the Word

Pentecost: Season of Growth

Identify ways you would like to grow.

10 min.

- Paper
- Pens, pencils, markers, or crayons
- Envelopes

Learning the Word

Dealing with Disruption

Practice facing conflict.

20 min.

- Bibles

The Word in the World

Take it to the Streets

Imagine using these steps in real life.

5 min.

- None



Beyond the Gospel

The Passover Walk through the instructions for the Passover.	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible• Flat bread (naan, pita, tortillas, etc.)• Brown roll paper• Red paint• Paint brush
Additional Activities		
One or Two, Part Two Practice working together.	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• White board or mural paper from Into the Word• Other supplies as needed
Two Person Worship Pray with a small group.	5 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optional: Bibles or white board or mural paper with marker
Dear Abby: Let's Talk Give advice for difficult situations.	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper• Pens or pencils• Internet-connected device• Optional: video recording and projecting
Sending		
	5 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Word @ Home take-home sheet





Cross+Generational Ministry has at its core the concept that faith is formed through meaningful relationships. When we connect with people of a different generation, we are able to learn from them and share our own experiences, no matter what age we are. We find our place in God’s story best by exploring that story as community.

Effective cross+generational experiences are:

- *Experiential*
- *Interactive*
- *Engaging*
- *Story-centered*
- *Home-based*
- *Equalizing*

all of which promote an **encounter with God**. All of the activities included in this leader guide are intended to engage these principles, through intentional cross+generational interaction and active, creative activities that bring the Bible story to life in our lives.

We pass on the faith through every action, experience, or relationship that nurtures a transformative relationship of trust with God and shapes the way we see and interact with God’s world. When we do this in meaningful, intergenerational relationships, our faith is enriched from the diversity of the experiences we share with each other. Our communities are strengthened, and we have confidence in our sense of belonging to God and with each other.



Background for Leaders

We serve a God of reconciliation. In Matthew 18:1, Jesus is addressing his disciples who had come to Jesus asking, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus responds by bringing a child in front of them, and then warning about being a stumbling block and sinning. Immediately preceding the assigned text is an illustration of God’s forgiveness of a shepherd leaving 99 sheep to search for the one lost sheep.

Gospel Summary: Matthew 18:15-20

Sin in the Church

In these instructions around dealing with conflict, Jesus is not coming up with something new; he is tweaking the process already in use by the synagogues. Interpersonal offenses should not be ignored, but they should also not bring about public shaming or revenge. Each step is designed to lead to reconciliation with as much grace as possible. First, the offended should try to reconcile privately. Second, bring witnesses. Third, bring the case before the whole church, the judicial assembly. As a last resort, the offender should be excluded from the community.

First Reading Summary: Exodus 12:1-14

God gives Moses and Aaron instructions on how to keep the Israelites safe from the tenth plague against the Egyptians, the killing of every firstborn. For the Lord to pass over them, they need to slaughter a goat, put its blood around their doorframes, and eat it roasted with unleavened bread. This is the event on which the annual celebration of the Passover is based.

Second Reading Summary: Romans 13:8-14

Paul is writing to the church in Rome, also on the topic of interpersonal relationships. He continues Jesus’ teaching on the greatest commandments of loving God and others, explaining that loving—serving—others is the active “do” that summarizes the “do nots” of the Ten Commandments. Jesus’ followers should be living for Jesus and others, not selfishly doing whatever they want.

The Point:

We should neither ignore the harmful actions of others nor shame them but seek reconciliation. It is difficult to imagine that people in the church might damage one another through their actions, but even those of us who consider ourselves faithful Jesus-followers fall into sin and act poorly. How can these behaviors be dealt with in the church? It is not healthy to let toxic behaviors continue, but in the Matthew text, Jesus gives us guidelines for dealing with challenging interpersonal situations.

Festivals & Seasons: Green

Today is the 15th Sunday after Pentecost. Green is used to indicate our growth in faith, and this season after Pentecost is a time in which we focus on the teachings and ministry of Christ. Some congregations use differing shades of green throughout the season, using a lighter green in summer and a darker green in fall.

Prayer of Preparation:

Jesus, sometimes we disagree and treat each other poorly. Help us to follow your guidance for working through conflict and to follow your example. Amen.

Lesson Plan

Into the Word

One or Two

10 min.

Talk about working together.

Supplies:

- Groupings Guide
- Materials for chosen cross+generational grouping
- White board or mural paper
- Markers
- Paper
- Pens or pencils

Preparation:

1. Determine how you would like to group participants at their tables (in a cross+generational grouping), using the Groupings Guide.
2. Prepare the materials indicated in the Guide.

Instructions:

1. Welcome the class and instruct them to group themselves cross+generationally according to the method you have selected from the Groupings Guide.
2. **If someone is sitting alone, please introduce yourself, and invite them to join you. Young children who are not comfortable leaving their families should sit at a table with someone in their family.**
3. **Today we are going to deal with a challenging topic: conflict. How many of you enjoy conflict? Pause for response. Most of us do not and will do anything possible to avoid it. But in today's lesson, Jesus gives us guidelines for healthy ways to deal with conflict.**



4. **One of the things that Jesus teaches us is that it is not always possible to do things alone, so we are going to think about that a little more.**
5. **In your small group, make a list of things that are easiest to do alone—like riding a bike or brushing your teeth. See how many things you can come up with in one minute.**
6. After one minute, invite groups to share some of their responses. Record them in one column on the white board or mural paper.
7. **Now, what things do you need two or more people for? Think about things like lifting a heavy object or playing in a band. Make another list, and we will share them again.**
8. After one minute, invite groups to share these responses. Record them in a second column on the white board or mural paper.
9. **Jesus gives us guidelines for times when it is best for us to deal with interpersonal conflict alone and when it is time to bring in some help. As we look at today's lesson, we will think of practical uses for this advice.**



Seasons of the Word

Pentecost: Season of Growth

10 min.

Identify ways you would like to grow.

Supplies:

- Paper
- Pens, pencils, markers, or crayons
- Envelopes

Preparation:

1. Decide if you will collect the envelopes and hold them until spring or if participants should keep them.

Instructions:

1. **Today we begin another year together. What are you expecting during this time? What would you like to learn, or what would you like for yourself or your family?**
2. **We begin our year during the season after Pentecost. The color for the season after Pentecost is green, and the season encompasses almost half of the entire church year.**
3. **If the class met last spring: If you were in this class last spring, you will remember that we ended in the Book of Acts with the story of Pentecost. This green season follows Pentecost, the story from the Book of Acts in which the Holy Spirit appeared as tongues of flame on the heads of the apostles and when the church began. Green is used to indicate our growth in faith, and this season after Pentecost is a time in which we focus on the teachings and ministry of Christ.**
4. **So, what do you hope for yourself during this time of teaching, learning, and growth? Use a piece of paper to write or draw something that you hope to learn, or a way in which you hope to grow. When you are finished, place your goals into an envelope, seal it, and put your name on the outside with today's date.**



5. Tell the group if you will be collecting their goals or if they should place them in a secure place, such as in their Bible, until spring.
6. **When we finish this class, look back at your learning and growth goals and see if your goals were met.**



Learning the Word

Dealing with Disruption

20 min.

Practice facing conflict.

Supplies:

- Bibles

Preparation:

1. If your congregation is currently dealing with conflict, you may want to be intentional about controlling the role plays by distributing suggestions instead of allowing small groups to create their own.

Instructions:

1. **At the beginning of our time together, I asked about conflict. Some of us are comfortable dealing with difficult situations, but others would rather avoid conflict. No matter how old we are, however, we cannot completely avoid these uncomfortable situations. And Jesus, knowing that we are human and make mistakes and bad choices, gives us some guidelines in this text to help us deal with these uncomfortable situations and bring about reconciliation.**
2. Read Matthew 18:15-20 to the group.
3. **In these instructions, Jesus is not coming up with something new; he is tweaking the process already in use by the synagogues. When someone offends us in some way, it should not be ignored, but we should also not bring about public shaming or revenge. Each step is designed to lead to reconciliation with as much grace as possible. What three steps do you see in Jesus' words?**
 - a. **First, the offended should try to reconcile privately.**
 - b. **Second, bring witnesses (two witnesses being necessary in judicial cases in the Torah).**



- c. **Third, bring the case before the whole church, the judicial assembly. As a last resort, the offender should be excluded from the community.**
- d. **It is also important to note that Jesus did not reject and condemn Gentiles and tax collectors but invited them into forgiveness. This suggests the possibility of forgiveness and reconciliation even after exclusion.**
4. **We all find ourselves in uncomfortable or conflicted situations at times. Some of those conflicts may happen at work or school. And some of them may even happen at church—which can make them even more difficult, because we expect our fellow believers to behave in a Christ-like way at all times. But that is not always the case.**
5. **We are going to practice talking through some real-life conflicts and using this model of conflict resolution. In your group, come up with a challenging situation that someone may have to deal with. You can use real-life examples, but please do not use any names or other identifying information about the situation.**
6. **When you have your idea, decide which two people will be experiencing the conflict. Create three situations. In the first example, the two people try unsuccessfully to resolve the conflict. In your next role-play, the same two people will repeat their parts, but one or two others will be brought into the situation. For the final scenario, your entire small group will participate.**
7. **Allow groups time to create and present their scenarios and discuss the possibilities for resolution after each situation.**
8. **Jesus spent time as a human and dealt with all of the things that we deal with, including conflict. Following his example may make these challenging situations easier to face in our own daily lives.**



The Word in the World

Take it to the Streets

5 min.

Imagine using these steps in real life.

Supplies:

- None

Instructions:

1. We just talked about—and even practiced—what it would be like to use these guidelines that Jesus gives us. Now, let's take it a step closer to home.
2. Where are you experiencing a challenging situation or conflict? Is there someone bullying you at school? Are you having difficulties with a coworker or neighbor? How might these steps help you in dealing with this situation? Always remember that if you are concerned that someone is actually threatening to harm themselves, you, or someone else, that their behavior should be reported to someone in authority: a teacher, a boss, or another trusted adult.
3. Share your thoughts with your small group. Please be considerate of confidentiality. Then report back next week and tell your group if you had a chance to deal with your challenging situation and how it went.



Beyond the Gospel

The Passover

10 min.

Walk through the instructions for the Passover.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- Flat bread (naan, pita, tortillas, etc.)
- Brown roll paper
- Red paint
- Paint brush

Preparation:

1. Before serving any food, always check with participants or caregivers for students who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.
2. Hang the brown paper on a wall so that it looks like a door. Place the red paint and brush nearby.

Instructions:

1. Today we hear instructions from Jesus about how to deal with conflict. The Israelites had plenty of conflict and strife during their history as well, and God gave them instructions for difficult situations, too. One of those times was during the ten plagues, when Moses was trying to get Pharaoh to set the Israelites free from Egyptian slavery.
2. The final plague was the death of the firstborn. God protected the Israelites during this final horrible plague. Our lesson from Exodus tells this story.
3. Read Exodus 12:1-7. When you reach verse 7, have a volunteer paint the brown “door” with the red paint along the sides and top.



4. Continue reading Exodus 12:8-14.
5. Distribute the flat bread, explaining that this bread is not unleavened but looks similar. Invite people to sample it while you finish.
6. **Look back at verse 11. There is a sense of urgency here: do not wait for your bread to rise, be dressed and ready to go.**
7. **Look at verse 14. God is protecting God's people, and commands them to remember this day and this saving story forever.**



Additional Activities

One or Two, Part Two

10 min.

Practice working together.

Supplies:

- White board or mural paper from Into the Word
- Other supplies as needed

Preparation:

1. You might want to prepare some challenges prior to class in case the ones from Into the Word are not practical in your setting. Some might be: playing a game of checkers, a handshake or high five, having a conversation, playing ping pong, riding a see-saw, ballroom dancing, etc. Gather any supplies needed.

Instructions:

1. **We know that there are many things we can do alone and dealing with conflict is one of those things. But sometimes it gets too difficult, and we need to ask for help.**
2. **There are many things that take two people to accomplish.** Refer to the group's original list, or the activities that you chose.
3. **Let's see how these things work as individual activities.** Allow the group to try some of the two-person activities alone or invite a volunteer to come forward to demonstrate.
4. **Now let's try it with two people.** Give them time to successfully complete the activities.
5. **It is important to be in community and to be available to help one another when help is needed. God did not mean for us to live in solitude and calls us to work together in the church.**



Additional Activities

Two Person Worship

5 min.

Pray with a small group.

Supplies:

- Optional: Bibles or white board or mural paper with marker

Preparation:

1. Write the Key Verse on the white board or mural paper, or plan to have participants look it up in their Bibles.

Instructions:

1. **We do not need to have an entire church full of people to worship together. Our Key Verse reminds us that “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:20. Let’s practice saying that together.**
2. **Worship can be as simple as offering to pray for one another, or reading Scripture together, or simply being in one another’s presence when help or comfort is needed.**
3. Divide into groups of two or three.
4. **Talk together about a way you can worship together: prayer, Scripture, song, or even silence. Spend a few moments being “two or three” together. Listen for God.**



Additional Activities

Dear Abby: Let's Talk

10 min.

Give advice for difficult situations.

Supplies:

- Paper
- Pens or pencils
- Internet-connected device
- Optional: video camera and projection

Preparation:

1. Search the Internet for examples of letters to Dear Abby. If a different advice column or source is more appropriate for your context, use that. Choose letters that your groups would find interesting and relevant, and print a different letter for each small group. Print only the original question; do not include Abby's response.
2. Note: If you have a younger class, they may not know who Dear Abby was. It could be an interesting addition to this activity to discuss where they get their advice.

Instructions:

1. **Once upon a time, there was a newspaper advice column named Dear Abby. People would write letters to Dear Abby with challenging situations that they were facing, and the advice columnist would respond with advice for their situation.**
2. **Today we do not necessarily get advice from a newspaper columnist. Many people will talk to family or friends, or turn to YouTube, Reddit, Twitter, or other social media.**



3. **We are going to practice giving advice based on what we learned in our lesson today. Each small group will receive an actual letter that was written to Dear Abby. Your challenge is to work together as a group to craft a response. You can write a letter, or you can film something in a social media format.**
4. Distribute the letters and allow groups time to work, and then invite them to share their responses and how they do or do not follow the advice in today's Gospel text.



Sending

Gather in groups of two or three. Begin by saying the Key Verse together: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Allow small groups time to pray together, and then close with the Key Verse again.

Remember to send “The Word @ Home” take-home sheet with participants before dismissing them.





The Word @ Home

15th Sunday after Pentecost
Gospel Reading: Matthew 18:15-20

The Point

We should neither ignore the harmful actions of others nor shame them but seek reconciliation.

Key Verse

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”
– Matthew 18:20

Scripture Summaries

Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

Sin in the Church

In these instructions around dealing with conflict, Jesus is not coming up with something new; he is tweaking the process already in use by the synagogues.

Interpersonal offenses should not be ignored, but they should also not bring about public shaming or revenge.

Each step is designed to lead to reconciliation with as much grace as possible. First, the offended should try to reconcile privately. Second, bring witnesses. Third, bring the case before the whole church, the judicial assembly. As a last resort, the offender should be excluded from the community.

First Reading: Exodus 12:1-14

God gives Moses and Aaron instructions on how to keep the Israelites safe from the tenth plague against the Egyptians, the killing of every firstborn. This is the event on which the annual celebration of the Passover is based.

Second Reading: Romans 13:8-14

Paul is writing to the church in Rome, also on the topic of interpersonal relationships. He continues Jesus’ teaching on the greatest commandments of loving God and others through serving.

Seasons & Festivals

Today is the 15th Sunday after Pentecost. Green is used to indicate our growth in faith, and this season after Pentecost is a time in which we focus on the teachings and ministry of Christ. Some congregations use differing shades of green throughout the season, using a lighter green in summer and a darker green in fall.

Discussion Starters

- Memorize the Key Verse: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” Matthew 18:20.
- What is a conflict that you are facing? Think about or talk about ways that you could use Jesus’ advice to deal with that conflict. Again, remember that if you are concerned that someone is actually threatening to harm themselves, you, or someone else, that their behavior should be reported to someone in authority: a teacher, a boss, or another trusted adult.
- Practice being “two or three together” this week: pray, serve, and worship together, knowing that God is with you.

Prayer of the Week

Jesus, sometimes relationships get tricky. Thank you for giving us an example for reconciliation. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you. What is God's message to us? How should we respond?

Sunday

Read Matthew 18:15-20 Jesus explains how to deal with conflict. Share a difficult situation that you are facing and brainstorm ways that Jesus' words can give you guidance.

Monday

Read Exodus 12:14-28 Moses gives instructions for the Passover. Talk about the origins of your family traditions.

Tuesday

Read Romans 13:1-7 Being subject to authorities. It can be difficult to listen to authority. What is one authority that is difficult to follow? What is one that is good to follow?

Wednesday

Read Matthew 21:18-22 Jesus curses the fig tree. Jesus even has power over nature. What other stories can you think of where Jesus demonstrates this power?

Thursday

Read Exodus 13:17-22 God leads the Israelites by pillars of cloud and fire. Share ways that God leads you.

Friday

Read Exodus 14:1-18 The parting of the Red Sea. Fill a sink or wash tub with water. Try to part the water. Talk about the miracles of God.

Saturday

Read Exodus 15:19-21 Miriam praises God. Search the Internet for "The Horse and Rider Song." Learn this song together, remembering Miriam's song of praise.



Blessing for the Week

Share this blessing while tracing a cross on each person's forehead or hand with their permission:
Jesus is with you, even when things are difficult.