

Ascension Sunday – year A

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Preparation

Read [Acts 1:6-14](#). Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump at you. Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara/eastera7.htm>
http://www.episcopalchurch.org/109452_43915_ENG_HTM.htm
http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming_faith.cfm?id=205
http://www.sermons4kids.com/up_up_and_away.htm
<http://www.msscrafter.com/newtestament/ascension.htm>
<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/children/lessons/Ascends.htm>
<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/ascles.htm>
<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/a/7Easter-a/FR-7Easter-a.html>
<http://children.calvarychapel.com/site/pdf/New/curr244.pdf>
<http://www.efree.mb.ca/lectionarypuzzles/in-awss.htm#e7>

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- White candle and candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- White cloth
- Yellow streamers (one per person) with *Alleluia* printed on them

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the candle and the Bible on the cloth. Give everyone an “Alleluia streamer” and invite them to say ‘**Alleluia**’ while waving their streamers around. Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thank you God for Jesus. Alleluia!

Thank you God for new life. Alleluia!

Thank you God for all that you have done. Alleluia! Amen.

Blow out the candle. Have the children put their streamers back on the table. Ask the children what they have had to do when preparing for a special event. (*Some possible ideas: cleaning, sending out invitations, getting new clothes, and hopefully someone will say waiting.*)

Explain that in today’s story the children will hear about a time when the friends of Jesus had to prepare for a special event.

Story Time

Materials needed

- Little toy people: one for each child, and three others
- cotton balls
- white tissue

Instructions

- Choose one of the toy people to be Jesus and put into the centre of the group. Choose two of the toy people to be the angels for later in the story – put a white tissue over them to act as white robes.
- Give each child a toy person to hold while the story is told.
- Use the toy people to act out the story with the children. Use your imagination.
- Get comfortable with the children to tell the story.

Jesus gathered with his friends just outside of Jerusalem. He told them that he had something very important to tell them. He told them there was something important for them to do.

Some of Jesus' friends had a question for him. They asked him, "Jesus is this the time when God's reign will come to Israel?"

Jesus answered them, "This question is not the right one for the time being. You are going to be given a great gift. The Holy Spirit is going to come and give you great power. All of you, my dear friends, will become my witnesses. You will tell the Good News to all in Jerusalem. You will tell the Good News to all in Judea. You will tell the Good News to all in Judea. You will tell the Good News to all in the whole world."

After Jesus had finished talking an astonishing thing occurred. Jesus was lifted up from the ground. As they watched a cloud covered him up from their sight.

(Use the cotton balls to cover up the toy person representing Jesus.)

As Jesus friends were standing watching him disappear, two people in white robes stood before them. They said. "Friends why do stand and look up to heaven? Jesus is not here. He has gone to heaven. He will come back the same way that he has left you."

All of them returned to Jerusalem. Some of them were feeling sad. Some of them were feeling tired. Some of them were feeling curious. Some of them were feeling excited. Some were just not sure what was going to happen.

When they came back to the city they came to the room where they had been staying. Here who was together in the room: Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Mary, Joanna, Mary Magdalene, Matthew, Simon, James the son of Alpheus, Judas son of James, and other members of Jesus' family. *(While naming the various friends of Jesus, have the children hold up their toy people and place them in the centre of the group; if there are more names than toy people don't get too worried about it.)*

They all knew that they had something important to prepare for. They had to wait, like Jesus told them, for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Teach the children the refrain for the closing poem before finishing up the story time.

They gathered everyday to pray to God.

They gathered everyday to wait for the Holy Spirit.

They gathered everyday to share stories of Jesus.

They gathered everyday to wait for the Holy Spirit.

They gathered everyday to learn more about God.

They gathered everyday to wait for the Holy Spirit.

They gathered everyday to sing praises to God.

They gathered everyday to wait for the Holy Spirit.

Response

Project Idea 1: Prayer Booklet Activity

This project will connect the children with the waiting and praying theme of the story.

Materials needed

- construction paper (one sheet per child)
- white paper
- crayons and fine tip markers
- seasonal stickers
- stapler and scissors

Instructions

Cut the construction paper in half horizontally – make two pieces for each child (for front and back covers). Cut enough white paper in half to make four sheets for each child. For the younger children make up the booklets (using the construction paper as the front and back covers and stapling it all together) ahead of time. Explain to the children that praying is an important part of preparation in the church. Help them to put their booklets together. Encourage them to decorate the front of the booklet with the markers and stickers that have been provided. With younger children you can suggest that they draw and colour pictures that describe their prayers for the coming week. Older children can write or draw as they are most comfortable doing. Invite the children to use the booklets to put their prayers in for use by themselves or with their families.

Project Idea 2: Ascension Picture

This idea is ideal for a group of younger children and will help to reinforce the story and the ideas that are presented in it.

Materials needed

- Ascension picture at the end of the lesson
- cotton balls
- crayons and markers
- glue sticks and glitter

Instructions

Print enough copies of the picture and give each child a copy of the picture. Invite them to colour them with the crayons or markers. When they are finished let them use the cotton balls and the glitter to make their pictures more three dimensional. While they are decorating them encourage the children to think about what Jesus' friends were feeling and preparing for to come into their lives.

Project Idea 3: Ascension Craft Time

This idea will allow the children to freely express their response to the story.

Materials needed

- cotton balls
- glue
- construction paper
- shiny wrapping paper
- tissue paper
- glitter
- markers and crayons
- scissors
- pipe cleaners
- tin foil and anything else that might come to your mind

Instructions

Lay out the materials for the children in an attractive manner. Invite them to look carefully at what has been laid out for them. Invite them to think about the story that they have just heard – remember that Jesus' friends are waiting, preparing, singing and waiting some more for the Holy Spirit. When they are ready encourage the children to use the materials to produce a piece of art work that reflects the story of the Ascension. If time, get everyone to share their creations with each other when they are complete.

Closing

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

Alleluia! God loves us!

Alleluia! Jesus teaches us!

Alleluia! Holy Spirit guides us! Amen.

Ascension Picture

