



Session 2
Spring 2016
Early Childhood

The Last Supper

LUKE 22:1-28

prepare



PRAYER

Thank you, God, for the opportunity to serve these children. Sometimes I feel inadequate, but I trust that you will use my gifts to help the children grow in faith. Amen.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

To experience Jesus' last days with his friends

STORY SUMMARY

Jesus sent Peter and John to make preparations for Passover in an upper room of a Jerusalem house. At the meal, Jesus said this would be his last Passover meal before eating it in God's kingdom. He thanked God for the bread and cup and shared them, telling his friends to remember him in this way. When the disciples argued about greatness, Jesus told them that the greatest one is the one who serves others.

teaching tips for early childhood

At the Last Supper, Jesus provided his friends a ritual to remember him by. Children who are a part of the worshipping community may recognize the similarity between the Last Supper and your congregation's communion or Eucharist services. Preschool children are still concrete thinkers. The bread and wine are symbols—everyday items that remind us of faith events.

Decide which Explore activities you will do. If you plan to make chapatis (Indian flatbread) during Create, gather the ingredients and materials listed on page 3 of the Early Childhood leaflet. Make a batch at home before the session to see what proportions will work best. Locate an electric skillet to make them in the room or arrange for someone to take the prepared dough to the kitchen to cook. Check Supplies and To do throughout the session to see what needs to be prepared. Go to www.ShineCurriculum.com/Extras to find tips for working with younger children.

Holy feasts

Today's text is the familiar story of Jesus' last supper with his intimate circle of friends before the arrest of Jesus. It is set during the holiest celebration of the Jewish calendar—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or Passover. This Jewish feast celebrates God's deliverance of Israel for ongoing generations. This means that everything in the story has a heightened significance because of the underlying symbolism. For example, if we go to a movie that is set during Christmas or Thanksgiving, we understand the plot, the dialogue, the music, the scenery, and the symbolism in relation to that particular holiday. Passover also means that pilgrims are pouring into Jerusalem with a lot of excitement and many expectations. The rulers and all those charged with crowd control are probably more anxious than usual. Everything that happens at the Last Supper happens against this backdrop.

Passover reinterpreted

The disciples carry out the preparations for the Passover feast in the conventional way. Jesus, however, introduces variation in the celebration itself. In the ritual he enacts before the seder meal, he connects the ancient feast with his own fate. In Luke's account, Jesus passes one cup and the bread before the meal and then, after the meal, a second cup. The first cup seems to emphasize his stated desire to eat this meal with his disciples because he will not eat again until the kingdom has been fulfilled. What the fulfillment of the kingdom means here is not entirely clear. After the resurrection Jesus does break bread with the disciples who walk with him to Emmaus, and he eats some fish with his disciples in Jerusalem. In this light, those scenes of Jesus eating may be indicating that his death and resurrection fulfilled the kingdom.

The bread that Jesus offers before the meal and the second cup of wine after the meal reveal Jesus' sense of purpose and his desire to be remembered. In both



offerings, Jesus refers to himself and uses the phrase "is given for you," connecting the Passover to his own fate. Luke had already linked the transfiguration to the exodus. In this scene that theme resounds again. To those ancient meanings of liberation, Jesus now adds other layers. The bread is also his body given. The wine is also his blood outpoured. As God delivered Israel from slavery and wandering, so Jesus delivers his disciples and all ongoing generations. The rituals of the bread and wine as Jesus reinterprets them this night are to become part of collective memory. They are to be reenacted among future believers in remembrance of him.

Missing the mark

The rising tensions outside the walls of the guest room where Jesus is eating with his disciples are matched by rising tensions within the room. These tender moments of communion are marred with discord. Jesus notes that the one who will betray him is not, in some sense, the key player. By now, what is going to happen is already building momentum. The act of disloyalty will only harm the betrayer himself. The disciples begin suspecting one another, and that speculation leads them into even more arguments about which of them is the greatest. The inner circle seems to be in a disarray of competition and ill spirit. There is a sense of foreboding.

Our passage ends with Jesus speaking a reprimand into this noisy tension. He tells the disciples that arguments about greatness have no place in their lives. They are not to be like the occupying Romans, with a rigid hierarchy and a show of lordship over others. Rather, they are to follow his own example and act as servants to one another; vying not for places of honor but for opportunities to serve.

gather

supplies

- *Shine Early Childhood Music CD*
- CD player
- Bell
- Crackers
- Juice
- Paper towels
- Cups

resource pack

- Bible memory poster (Luke 19)
- Seasons poster

media connections

- *Thank You for This Food* by Debbie Trafton O'Neal
- *Bread, Bread, Bread* (Around the World Series) by Ann Morris
- *Bread around the World* by John Serrano
- *Bread Is for Eating* by David Gershator (in Spanish and English)
- Internet search for Taize song "Eat This Bread"

BUILD COMMUNITY

When all children have gathered, sing the following words to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat":

Ring, ring, ring the bell, ring it loud and clear. We are full of joy because _____ (name) is here.

Pass a bell around the circle, singing a verse for each person.

WORSHIP TOGETHER

Sing "We All Are Invited" (track 28) and "You Shall Love" (track 31) from the *Shine Early Childhood Music CD*. Song lyrics are at the back of this guide.

Pray:

God, you give all good things. Thank you for giving us friends to grow with and food to share. Amen.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Pausing to express gratitude for the food we eat is an important spiritual practice. Look at the fall section of the Seasons poster from the resource pack. Ask what the children notice about this picture. Read the words in the speech bubbles.

Sing "Thanks for the Friends We Meet," which is a meal prayer from the *Shine Early Childhood Music CD*, track 25. Song lyrics and motions are at the back of this guide.

After the prayer, share crackers and juice as a snack. Ask for helpers to hand out paper towels, cups, and crackers.

Bible memory

Stand, join hands, and move slowly in a circle while saying the Bible memory passage. Lift your joined hands high for the words "glory in the highest heaven!"

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!

—Luke 19:38

experience

SHARE THE STORY

Open the Bible to Luke 22 and show children the words of the Bible story. Say:

This story is a gift for you, for me, for all people.

Lay the cloth “road” from session 1 on the floor. At one end, make a large square using yarn to represent the city of Jerusalem. In the center of the square, lay a piece of paper to represent a house. Set a rectangular block on the paper to represent a table. Set a small “jar” formed from play dough next to the piece of paper.

Have several small squares of cloth ready. These will be laid on the road to represent cloaks.

Use play dough to make small plates, cups, and bread when indicated in the story.

The Bible story is found on the back of the story picture in the resource pack. Follow the instructions there for movement of the props.

WONDER AND REFLECT

Reflect on the story using several wondering questions. Allow time for children to think and respond aloud if they wish.

- I wonder what Peter and John did to get ready for the meal.
- I wonder how the owner of the house felt when Jesus and his friends came.
- Imagine you were at the table with Jesus and his friends. I wonder where you would sit.
- Imagine breaking bread and giving it to your friends.
- I wonder how you help others.

PEACE NOTES

When Jesus sent his friends out to serve, he sent them out in twos. In last week’s story, two friends went to get the donkey. In today’s story, two friends prepared the Passover meal. Working together can make things easier and more fun.

Have children complete “Happy helpers” on page 2 of the Early Childhood leaflet.



The Last Supper

Luke 22:1–28

supplies

- Bible
- Early Childhood leaflets
- Crayons

storytelling props

- Yarn
- Cloth (road)
- Small squares of cloth (cloaks)
- Piece of paper (house)
- Wooden block (table)
- Play dough

to do

- Practice telling the Bible story using the props.
- Purchase or make play dough. A recipe is available at www.ShineCurriculum.com/Extras.

explore

CREATE

Look at the breads on page 3 of the Early Childhood leaflet. Invite children to point to or talk about types of bread they have eaten or would like to try. Then mix and cook a flatbread, such as pancakes or chapatis, an Indian flatbread. A recipe for chapatis is on page 3.

supplies

- Early Childhood leaflets
- Supplies for baking bread of choice
- Electric skillet
- Spatula
- Plates



MOVE

Recall that Jesus sent two friends to find the person with a jar of water and set up the meal. Set up an obstacle course for partners to complete. Use masking tape to mark out a winding path for each pair. At the end of the path, place a plastic water jug as well as dishes and cutlery that can be used to set a table. If paths intersect, children watch out for other partners as they help each other over boxes, through hoops, over a rope, and along a winding path.

supplies

- Masking tape
- Boxes
- Plastic hoops
- Rope
- Jugs
- Plastic dishes and cutlery

other ideas

- Choose a way that your group can serve the church today. For instance, water plants, collect or hand out bulletins, give a snack to another group, sing a song to an adult class, and so on.
- Show children the items your church uses for communion.

RETELL

Children can use play dough to make a flatbread, and then break it into pieces as Jesus did. Make simple play dough cups to remember the cup the friends shared in the story. A play dough recipe is available at www.ShineCurriculum.com/Extras.

supplies

- Play dough

DISCOVER

Jesus and his friends shared a staple food, made from grain. Explore grains that are essential foods in various cultures. Before the session, scoop grain into an empty plastic bottle. Tape or glue the lid shut. Make several bottles to show several kinds of grain. Children can look at the grains and listen to the various sounds the grains make as they shake the bottles.

Option: Provide books about bread from around the world. See suggestions in Media connections.

supplies

- Plastic bottles
- Variety of grains, such as barley, cornmeal, cracked wheat, oats, and rice
- Tape or glue
- Books about bread and grain (optional)

bles

PRAY

Gather the group for a blessing, using motions with a prayer. Pray:

Thank you, God, for our friends. (*Point to each child.*) **Thank you for our families.** (*Hug yourself.*) **Thank you for the food and fun we share.** (*Hold cupped hands in front of you.*) **Amen.**

SEND

Have children link arms in pairs. The pairs can walk around the room together while singing “Yo tengo un amigo que me ama” (I Have a Friend Who Loves Me) from the *Shine Early Childhood Music CD*, track 29. Song lyrics are at the back of this guide.

Say a blessing to each pair of children:

_____ (name) and
_____ (name), go in
love!

supplies

- Early Childhood leaflets
- *Shine Early Childhood Music CD*
- CD player

Looking ahead

Keep the play dough for session 3. Save the storytelling props for use in session 5.



leader's closing prayer

How do you identify with the disciples? What do the symbols of bread and wine at Jesus' welcome table mean to you?

Jesus, there is no love greater than yours. Teach me how to accept your love and how to share it with the children I teach. Amen.

Kids at this age also seem to enjoy helping. Having special jobs for them to help get ready for an activity or roles for them during the story really gets them engaged.

—Monica Schiefele
Ottawa, Ontario