



October 2015
Volume 88 Number 8

From the Clergy Associate for Family Ministries

October Message

Jenn Liljgren and I spent time this summer linking the stories we tell in Children's Chapel, the stories the children discuss in Church School, and the stories we hear in the Sunday lectionary. We will keep working to align the lessons for the three-year cycle so we continue to experience these connections.

In our Sunday lectionary this fall, we will spend a great deal of time with Job, hearing stories that remind us of the challenge of being faithful in the face of suffering. These stories, along with many from the Old Testament, remind us that there is nothing new under the sun. Over and over again in scripture we hear stories of God working in the most unexpected of places, through the most unexpected and un-expecting of individuals. These individuals have in common that they listen to God and, sooner or later, follow God's call.

Below is a list of the stories we will hear in Children's Chapel, and a brief summary of the themes that connect them. I hope you will find these summaries helpful as you converse with children in our Church School about the lessons they are learning and the questions they ask.

Abraham and Sarah God can do anything. God works with us even when we think it isn't possible.

Jacob Meets Angels Meeting God in unexpected places. Noticing that the places in which we find ourselves are holy.

Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors Being favored does not mean life is easy. Joseph's story and the critical role he played extends beyond this story (a lesson for all of us in being patient in times of great suffering and in the face of injustice, realizing that our desired timing and God's timing are often vastly different). That boy sold into slavery by his jealous brothers ultimately saves those brothers and his whole family from death.

Moses From the child of a Hebrew slave God raises up a holy man who saves God's people. Moses knew who he was, and he listened to God's call.

Joshua – Jericho and the Promised Land Joshua leads people across the Jordan and into the Promised Land. Joshua finishes what Moses began. Again, God's timing and our perspective do not often coincide. The people of Israel reached the Promised Land after Moses' life had come to an end.

God Chooses David From the unexpected, youngest son of Jesse, a shepherd boy named David, God raises up a king.

All Saints' Day Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) Chapter 44 to 50: These chapters, introduced as the Praises of Famous Men (of Piety) chronicle most of the stories we will have read from the Old Testament in Chapel this fall. An emphasis of the lesson is that some (saints) who have stayed close to God are remembered by others, others are known to God alone.

Jeremiah This young man thinks he is not sufficient alone to do what God asks. God calls him to be a powerful prophet. God calls Jeremiah to speak hard words to people; some get angry and try to hurt him. God promises Jeremiah maximum support (I will be with you), minimum protection (doesn't mean you will escape danger).

Jonah and the Great Fish Jonah thinks he can run from God's call. He comes to know better.

An Angel Appears to Mary Mary receives and accepts God's call despite the harsh reality that her acceptance does not pave her an easy path. She bears the savior of the world. God works the greatest glory from the humblest of beginnings.

Mary and Elizabeth Elizabeth, and even unborn John, recognize Jesus' presence and Mary's blessedness.

I hope this list will help you as you engage in conversation with the children in your life in this parish. If you have any questions or would like to talk further, please be in touch. Please also consider joining us if you are available for a meeting of the St. Elizabeth's Moms Group. Many of these themes and topics surface in our conversations about the challenges of caring for families and raising up children in the Christian faith and life.

Moms filter in and out of our gatherings. You are welcome and encouraged to come for whatever meeting you can. We look forward to your presence with us. And all are welcome. You do not have to be a mother of babies to attend. Some who choose to join us have children in college and beyond. The breadth of perspective on the parenting continuum makes our conversations rich and full. Please join us.

Faithfully,
Cathy Quinn
Clergy Associate for Family Ministries

