

Jesus Feeds the 5,000 Cooking Workshop:

This lesson set was written by Carol Hulbert from: First United Methodist Church, 120 S. State Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Copyright 2004, updated by Carol in 2008. First United Methodist Church, Ann Arbor, MI. Permission to copy materials granted for non-commercial use provided credit is given and all cited references remain with this material.; Adapted by Beth Tobin for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA, in 2013.

OVERVIEW:

Students will make fish shaped pretzels as they uncover the layers of miracles in this story, explore communion, and talk about the many blessings God provides for us.

Bible Text: John 6:1-14

(Also in Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, and Luke 9:11-17)

Memory Verse: John 6:14 NIV

After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Leader Preparation:

- Read the scripture for this lesson, both the John and Mark accounts.
- Read and reflect on the background material provided for this lesson.
- Watch the Bible Study Video found at www.gloriadeikids.org
- Prepare an opening and/or closing prayer in case you need one.
- Gather the following materials:
 - Clean-up supplies
 - Parchment paper,
 - Brush to apply egg yolk
 - Small bowl
 - A fork
 - Serving spatula
 - Napkins, Washable or disposable cups (1 per child)
 - Bread stick dough (1 package for every 6 kids, creates 2 pretzels per kid)
 - Eggs (1 for each week of this Rotation)
 - Bibles
 - Kosher salt
 - Sandwich-size plastic zip bags

Important Allergy Note:

Pillsbury brand of bread sticks does not contain milk, eggs or nuts.

Before Start of Class:

- Cover cookie sheets with parchment paper.
- Separate one egg into white and yolk; discard yolk. Beat white with a fork.
- Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Opening:

Introduce yourself and others and welcome everyone to the Cooking Workshop. Shepherds will take attendance.

Open class with prayer.

Ask: Have you ever been at a dinner for ten people?
What kind of food did they have at your dinner for ten?
Have you ever been at a dinner with 100 people?
What about 500?
5000 people?

Dig In:

Say: Today we are learning about a miracle that Jesus did. This miracle involved food – bread and fish.

Ask: Do you know what the miracle was?

Say: Jesus was able to feed more than 5000 people with just five loaves of bread and two fish.

Ask: Do you think that five loaves of bread and two fish are enough to feed more than 5000 hungry people?

Say: To help us remember this story we are going to make fish-shaped pretzels. We are going to each be able to make two pretzels; one you may eat and one to share with someone else. We are going to do our baking first then while the pretzels are baking, we'll talk about our story.

Wash your hands first and then have everyone wash their hands.

The Pretzel “recipe”

1. Open the packages of bread stick dough; one package for every 6 students which makes 12 pretzels.
2. Separate the dough into 12 sticks per package.
3. Roll each individual stick of dough into a rope about 8-12 inches long. This can be done right on the counter or roll on parchment. Shape each rope into a fish-shaped pretzel. Each child may make 2 pretzels. Explain how they may eat one pretzel and share the other one.
4. Place the pretzels on parchment covered baking sheets.
5. Brush with beaten egg white. Sprinkle lightly with salt.
6. Bake at 375 for 10-13 minutes. Ask the Shepherd to watch the pretzels to see that they don't over brown. (It may take less than 10 minutes with the convection oven.)

7. Have students wash their hands and return to the teaching table.

Ask the Shepherd...

To time the pretzels and remove them from oven and allow them to cool on the cookie sheets. When the pretzels have cooled, have the Shepherd bring the pretzels to the table.

Reading & discussion:

While you wait...

Distribute Bibles.

Ask:

Where in the Bible would we read about Jesus and his disciples? (in the NT)

What are the first four books of the New Testament?

What do we call those first four books? (the Gospels)

Say: The word Gospel means "good news."

Ask: What is the good news that we learn about from Jesus?

Say: There is lots of good news in the Gospels: Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins, Jesus has power over death because he rose from the dead to live again, and Jesus loves each one of us and wants us to believe in him.

Say: We find the story of Jesus feeding multitudes of people in all four Gospels! This is the only miracle besides Jesus' resurrection that is told in all four of the Gospels. We are going to read the version that is in the Gospel of John.

Have the kids find John, chapter 6, verses 1-15 in their Bibles. (Remember to encourage kids to bring their Bibles.) If this is a week early in the Rotation, you should read the scripture and have the students follow along. Towards the end of the Rotation, ask the students if they can tell you the story. Have them check their Bibles for accuracy.

Ask: In the story, why did the "great crowd" of people follow Jesus? (They had seen the miracle of Jesus healing people. Maybe they themselves needed healing; maybe they were curious.)

Say: It's not so clear in the gospel of John, but when we read this story in the other Gospels we realize that the people had been listening to Jesus all day. Surely they were getting hungry.

Ask:

Why do you suppose the people didn't bring any food with them? (They left in too

big of a hurry. Maybe they didn't expect to stay so long. Maybe they ate it earlier in the day. Maybe they did have food but didn't want to share.)

Why do you think Jesus wanted to feed the people? (He had compassion for them; perhaps he knew that a miracle was to be performed.)

What do you think Jesus' followers thought when they saw only 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread to feed all those people?

How do you think you would have felt if you had been one of the 5000 fed that day?

What is a miracle? (A wonderful event showing us the power of God.)

Say: These stories show Jesus' miracle-working power. This story we just read also shows that a boy shared his lunch, even though it was just a little, and Jesus was able to have it feed over 5000 people!

Ask: If you had been one of the people there during this story, would you have shared your lunch? What do you think would have happened if the boy hadn't brought a lunch or hadn't shared it?

Say: **Jesus wants us to share what we have with others. When we ask God to bless what we have, we will be amazed at what can happen. God can take what little we have to share, and turn it into something bigger.**

Other information that can be shared whenever there is time and wherever it fits: In Bible times, bread was a basic item in everyone's diet. The baking of bread would have been a daily task. In the Bible story, it talks about "barley loaves". Barley bread was what poor people most often ate. Their bread would have looked like pita bread; it would have been flat. Another interesting thing to realize about people in Bible times is that they would rarely share food outside their own home. Jewish people couldn't be sure that their dietary laws had been followed by other people in the preparation of foods. So it's amazing that 5000 people would have shared the food of strangers!

When the pretzels are cool enough:

Distribute a napkin, a cup and one pretzel to each child. Ask students to not start eating yet!

Say: We have one pretzel that we are going to be able to eat (but not yet!) and

one we will share with someone else. We will also be sharing our pretzel to eat with each other! We will do it in this manner: tear off a piece of pretzel and give it to someone else nearby. As you do, tell that person something God has given you.

You may need to prime the pump with suggestions: a family, good friends, etc. Take up a pretzel yourself and share with a child something that God has given you.

Say: Try to repeat this process with everyone in the class. When others give you a piece of bread, put it in your cup. Let's all eat after everyone is done sharing.

When sharing is complete, ask:

What were some of the responses you got as you shared your pretzels?
Why do you suppose God provides so much for us?

Say: Look at your cup. Sharing the pieces of our pretzels has made our cup seem fuller.

What are some similarities between this story and Communion? (Breaking bread, giving thanks, where two or three are gathered in my name, being part of a community of believers, remembering Jesus and His love for us)

As you eat your pretzel pieces think about all that God gives us because he loves us. Enjoy your pretzel pieces!

Extra Activities (If you have extra time):

Involve the kids in helping to clean up. Let wipe counters, put away supplies, put dirty dishes by the dishwasher, etc.

Closing:

Ask for any prayer requests. Ask if anyone would like to lead the group in prayer. Be prepared to say a prayer yourself, working in prayer requests. Use the Lord's Prayer as the ending. A suggestion: "Thank you God, for giving us Jesus. Help us to learn more about sharing what we have. Thank you for all you provide for us. (End with everyone joining in on the Lord's Prayer.) Amen."

Have students bag up an extra pretzel to share with someone. Tell them they must share the Bible story as well as the pretzel.

Resources:

- Pretzel idea borrowed from a previous post at Rotation.org
- *The Children's Worker's Encyclopedia of Bible-Teaching Ideas: New Testament*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1997. (sharing the food idea, page 82)

Notes about this Workshop: When we did this Rotation in 2002 we used the following recipe: "Bread Pretzels or Sticks" from the *Joy of Cooking*. Our cooking person mixed the dough up at home on Sunday morning.

The recipe:

Combine in a mixer bowl --

1 c. warm water (105 -115 degrees F)

1 pkg dry yeast

Add and beat for 3 minutes --

1 and 1/2 c. flour

2 T. soft butter

1/2 tsp. salt

1 T. sugar

Stir in --

1 and 1/4 c. flour

and knead until dough isn't sticky. Let rise in covered greased bowl. Our cooking person counted the drive to church as the "rising time". (So this was approx. 45 minutes of rising). Once the workshop started here's how the rest of the recipe worked out:

Preheat oven to 475 (degrees F)

Punch down dough and divide into 12 pieces. Have kids work the dough with their hands to roll it into 18 inch lengths about as thick as a pencil. Loop it into fish-shapes.

The real recipe calls for the pretzel shapes to rise again. **We skipped this** without any problem.

So what happened next was:

Boil a solution of 4 c. water and 5 tsp baking soda. (Don't use an aluminum pan). With a slotted spoon an adult lowers the pretzels into the water for about 1 minute or until they float. Put them on a greased baking sheet. (Parchment paper makes cleanup a lot easier - it is worth the cost!) Sprinkle with coarse salt (or with cinnamon sugar) and bake for 12 minutes. Made twelve 6-inch pretzels.

If you use this material, even in a modified form, please include the following reference:
Hulbert, Carol. "Jesus Feeds 5000+ Cooking Workshop." Oct. 08. Place URL where lesson found inside angle brackets <www.rotation.org>.