



**Mennonite
Church
Canada**

Resource Centre

The Best of Friends

Children's Story

Cycle A, Proper 26

Title: The Best of Friends
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Church: Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, MB
Text: Matthew 23:1-12
Theme: When we are filled with God's love, our actions will spring out of that love, rather than out of a desire to impress others.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder how Nikki and Elizabeth got to be friends.
- I wonder if God wants to help us grow such friendships in our church family.
- I wonder how God's love shows through in the ways we help each other.

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Gathering Activity:

Take a few moments to welcome the children and help them settle into a mood of holy listening. Imagining themselves onto the lap of Jesus is a good way of doing this. Once they are settled, introduce the story as follows. The ideas for today's story come from Matthew 23. (Show them the text.) In today's Bible reading, Jesus scolds people who pretend to be good when others are watching them instead of being good because they are full of God's love. Many people get better at just pretending to be good as they get older, but in today's children's story there is an old person and a young person who don't just pretend to be good friends, they are true friends. If Jesus was talking about Nikki and Elizabeth, he would not scold, he would smile and say they are the kind of friends we should try to be. So let's listen.

Story:

Nikki and Elizabeth are best friends. They like eating gooseberries from the garden, working or playing in the yard, and painting pictures together. Elizabeth is older than

Nikki and likes to teach her things and tell her stories. Nikki is much younger than Elizabeth. She likes listening to Elizabeth's stories and always likes to help her. They became best friends the summer when Nikki was eight, and Elizabeth was seventy-six.

That was when Elizabeth taught Nikki to paint. Elizabeth is an artist and says that Nikki is an artist, too.

As Nikki grew bigger, she helped Elizabeth more and more with the yard work. Nikki wanted to water the flowers all by herself, or trim the tree all by herself, or to mow the lawn all by herself. When they painted together, Nikki wanted to do her painting all by herself. Nikki wanted to show Elizabeth what a big girl she was.

Each year, as Elizabeth got older, she stayed beside Nikki in the yard, telling her the names of the flowers and how much water they needed, what branches to cut off the tree, and what plants to mow around. When they painted together, Elizabeth made sure to tell Nikki what a wonderful job she was doing. She also made sure that Nikki was using the right brushes and the right colours. Elizabeth liked watching Nikki grow, and Elizabeth wanted Nikki to know that she could still do things, too.

Nikki loved Elizabeth for being Elizabeth, it didn't matter how old Elizabeth was or how much she could still do. Elizabeth loved Nikki for being Nikki, it didn't matter to Elizabeth how big Nikki was or how much she could do all by herself. Nikki learned that Elizabeth was happiest when they really worked together, and then Nikki was happy, too.

Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for true friends who show us what your love is like. Thank you for helping us to be true friends with others and with you. Amen.