



**Mennonite
Church
Canada**

Resource Centre

Helping a scary neighbour

Children's Story

Year B, Epiphany 6

Title: Helping a scary neighbour
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Church: Floradale Mennonite Church,
Floradale, ON
Text: Mark 1:40-45
Theme: Jesus helps people who
frighten us.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder why Sammy and Susie were scared of the skunk.
- I wonder if there are animals and people that scare you.
- I wonder when Jesus wants us to help scary people or animals.
- I wonder what this story makes you wonder about.

Gathering Activity:

Welcome the children as they gather for the children's story. Encourage them to settle into a comfortable position and to remember that our good God is very near. Once a mood of holy expectation has been established, ask them if they have ever met people who seemed really scary. Tell them that the ideas for today's story come from a time in Jesus' life, where Jesus met and healed a man who frightened others because he had a contagious sickness of the skin, called leprosy. People didn't even want to come close to this man, because they didn't want to get his sickness. That story is written down in Mark 1:40-45. It is here in my Bible. Today's story is about animals who are scared of another animal, not because of his sickness, but because of his smell. Let's see what happens.

Story:

Sammy and Susie were cottontail rabbits, a brother and sister, who lived under a big fir tree. They liked their home. They could wiggle down underneath where the branches reached the ground and hide

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there safely. It was close to a big garden. This was very nice, because in the summer they would munch on the tender little pea plants, or nibble at the lettuce or feast on the clover that grew around the garden. Yummy!

When the weather got cold, Sammy found a way to get inside the wooden slats of the nearby compost bin. Sometimes he could find apple peelings or other delicious goodies.

Sammy and Susie's mother taught them to be careful. She did not want them to become supper for someone else. They listened and stayed away from dogs and cats and people.

One day, a new animal moved into their neighbourhood. It was black with a white stripe and had a bushy tail. What do you think Sammy and Susie did? You're right; Sammy and Susie decided to stay far away from the skunk.

One night, Susie woke up because she heard a cry for help. She was worried and afraid. She woke up her brother Sammy. They snuck out to investigate. The crying noise seemed to be coming from the compost bin. It smelled and sounded like the skunk was trapped in there. They were afraid of the skunk. Sammy and Susie didn't know what to do. What would you do? Finally, they decided to wake their mother and tell her about it.

"What's the matter?" she said when they woke her.

"The skunk is trapped in the compost bin, and he's crying and we can't sleep."

"Even if it's a skunk, we should try to help," said Mother Rabbit. Helping someone they were scared of was a new idea for Sammy and Susie.

Mother Rabbit bravely led the way to the compost bin. The skunk was still trapped inside, but Mother Rabbit dug at just the right place and made a hole that was big enough for the skunk. The skunk squeezed out of the hole and hurried away. He never even stopped to say, "Thank you."

Sammy and Susie were surprised that their mother helped the skunk, but they were happy that they could get back to sleep. As they fell asleep, they wondered about when it is OK to help scary animals.

Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for not being scared of people that scare us. Thank you for chances to be brave and help others. Please help us know what you want us to do when scary animals and people need help. Amen.