



the helper

Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 11

Title: The Helper
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Church: Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg MB
Text: Luke 10: 38-42
Theme: It is really good and important to spend time with Jesus.

Gathering Activity:

Invite the children forward in an inviting manner. Once you've helped them settle into comfortable positions and an attitude of holy listening, explain that it's really important to spend time with Jesus, even when there are a lot of things to do. That's what Jesus teaches in today's Bible reading (show then Luke 10 in your Bible). In this children's story, Jonathan finds one way of doing that.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder why some people just love being helpers.
- I wonder what it is like to need lots of help, like Mr. Martens did.
- I wonder what it is like to visit with people when it's hard to understand their words.
- I wonder how Jonathan and Mr. Martens became such good friends.
- I wonder how this story reminds us of spending time with Jesus.

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Story:

Jonathan was a helper. Before and after school he was a crossing guard and helped other children safely cross the street when there were no cars coming. He helped put away the sports equipment after gym class, and at lunch time he helped the other kids play nicely. Jonathan helped at home, too. He and his sister took turns setting the supper table, drying the dishes, taking out the compost and cleaning the cat's litter box. On Saturday mornings they helped clean the whole house. Jonathan was a helper.

When Jonathan's neighbour, Mr. Martens, had a stroke and couldn't lift or walk very fast anymore, lots of people wanted to help him. So did Jonathan. When Jonathan went over to mow the lawn, it was already done. Jonathan went to pull weeds from the flower gardens, but somebody else was already working on it. Jonathan went into the living room, but somebody was already vacuuming. Jonathan peered into the kitchen, but somebody was already making supper. Jonathan wandered downstairs, but somebody was doing laundry. Jonathan wondered where all these 'somebodies' came from.

Jonathan was sad, he really did want to help but he didn't know what to do. As he was walking to the door, he looked over and saw his neighbour, just sitting there. He looked lonely, even though there were others all around doing things for him. Jonathan paused, and then he went over and sat beside Mr. Martens. He couldn't talk very fast, and it was hard to understand some of his words, but Jonathan waited and listened. The more he listened, the more he understood. Once Mr. Martens realized Jonathan could understand him, he started telling him stories. Jonathan came to see him often. During these visits, Mr. Martens told him stories from the old country and other parts of the world, or stories about how much has changed, stories about children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren, stories of war and of peace, and stories about strange weather and big disasters bringing people together. Sometimes, when the neighbour was too tired to talk, he asked Jonathan to read aloud from the Bible. Mr. Martens knew all of the stories from the Bible and asked Jonathan

to read stories he knew Jonathan would like.

Jonathan had a reading buddy at school, but this was different. One day his neighbour smiled and said to Jonathan, "I like it when you visit. You aren't in a rush but have time to talk with me. You're a great help." Jonathan smiled, "I like coming too," he said. "At first I came to help you, but now we are friends and you tell me such good stories. I'm glad you are my friend."

Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for good stories and good friends. Thank you that you are our best friend and that we can spend time with you by helping others, by being quiet, by reading the stories you told in the Bible, and by praying. Help us be good friends with you. Amen.