



Gifts from God to the World

Children's Story

Year B, Proper 12

Title:	Gifts from God to the World
Author:	Michelle Stoesz
Church:	Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, MB
Text:	John 6: 1- 21
Theme:	If we share, God can do wonderful things with our gifts.
Needed:	a package, wrapped in wrapping paper, with a mirror inside; a bow, stickers and hearts.

Wondering questions:

- I wonder how God could create so many different people.
- I wonder what would happen if everyone thought of themselves as a gift from God to the world.
- I wonder how God wants me to share my gifts.

Gathering Activity:

Warmly welcome the children as they settle into comfortable places for children's time, that part of worship where adults try to communicate the day's Gospel theme in ways that connect with children. Encourage them to imagine themselves as part of a large crowd that had gathered to listen to Jesus on a hillside beside a lake, and then open your Bible to John 21 and read verses 1-3 to show them the setting for today's Gospel reading. Tell them that, in the rest of that reading, Jesus uses a boy's gift and shares his own abilities and love with others. In today's story time, we will prepare ourselves to listen to that Bible story by thinking together about gifts we get from God.

This Children's Story is part of a larger story archive available as a resource to teachers, ministers, and others of Mennonite Church Canada ©2009. Posted by permission of the author. Edited by Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada

Story:

I have a gift here; it is a gift from God. It is a very special gift. I want to share it with you by asking you to peek inside. When you see what is inside, please don't let anyone else know what you see. Then we can talk about it once everyone has had a chance to see

it for themselves. (Open up the box and let all the children see themselves in the mirror individually.)

What did you see? You saw yourselves? How is that a gift from God? (Encourage a few responses.) God made each one of you. Each one of us is a special gift from God to the world. We are all the same in some ways and different in others. That is part of the special way God made us. We all need love and respect and like to belong. Those are ways we are the same. Some of us look similar, and some look quite different on the outside. We have different colours of skin, of eyes, of hair. Our teeth and our noses may look different. We come in different sizes, too. God delights in variety and made each of us a little different.

God also prepared each of us to do special things. Some of us enjoy reading, some of us enjoy running and playing sports, some of us enjoy painting and making crafts. God made each one of us and God made us all special. God made us with our special interests and abilities so that we can help each other with them; so we can be gifts of God's love to the world.

Will someone who does a good job of tying bows, please help me put a bow on this box? Then, I would like the rest of you to help by taking a sticker and sticking it onto this box. It will remind us of the gifts God has given us and wants us to be for others. You can take another sticker and a heart back to your seat with you. While you are worshiping with us, draw a picture on the heart. God gave you all your own special ways of drawing. I would like all of you to share your gifts with the whole church in that way.

When the worship time is over you can come and drop it through the slit in this box.

Before you go to bed tonight, I would like you to ask one or two special grown-ups in your life, "What are my special gifts?" "What am I good at?" Maybe you can help them notice their special gifts, too. I'm sure they'd like to hear what you think they are good at, too.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for making each one of us with special gifts. Please help us to share the gifts you give us with the world, so that the world becomes more the way Jesus wants it to be. Amen.