



## Family Connections

# Children's Story

Year B, Proper 13

**Title:** Family Connections  
**Author:** Michelle Stoesz  
**Church:** Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, MB  
**Text:** John 6: 24 – 35  
**Theme:** Life in God's family is good.

### Wondering questions:

- I wonder what it would be like to live in a boarding school.
- I wonder what it is like to be like family with people we never met before.
- I wonder if missionary children still go to boarding schools. (not very often)
- I wonder how believing in Jesus can help us with the things we need.

### Gathering Activity:

Welcome the children as they gather and remind them that this story time is a chance to gather close together with other children and with God. Take a moment to become aware of being together, as a group of children in the nearness of God. Imagine yourselves altogether fitting onto and snuggling into God's big lap. Today's story is there to help us understand what Jesus said in John 6 about meeting our needs. Here it is in my Bible. Listen for this when the Scripture is read. But now let's listen to this story which happened many years ago to Elizabeth, a little girl, who had to go to school far away from her parents and learned to live in God's bigger family.

---

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:**

There was a little girl whose name was Elizabeth. Elizabeth and her family went to live in Nigeria, on the continent of Africa, for three years as missionaries with MCC (Mennonite Central Committee). In Nigeria, Elizabeth would have to go to a boarding school because there was no English school near their mission station. She would only see her parents on every other weekend. There was no phone at the school, so Elizabeth couldn't even talk to her mom and dad between her weekends at home with them.

Elizabeth really missed her family. They missed her. It helped her to remember what her parents had told her: that Jesus' love connected them and that his Spirit was right inside her and right inside them. Thankfully, that Spirit was right inside her boarding school teachers, too. Her teachers told her wonderful stories about being friends with Jesus. They told her that they were all parts of God's family. They were like God's love with skin on, and were very much like parents for her. Best of all, they helped the boarding school children prepare little picture gifts for their weekends at home and gave them chances to talk and write about their family when they got back to the boarding school.

Even though Elizabeth still found it hard to say good-bye to her family, believing in Jesus helped her become a happy part of a bigger family, God's boarding school family. She made friends with the children of other missionaries. All of them believed in Jesus, and claimed him as their friend. They could pray to Jesus and talk to Him like they would talk to their parents or friends that they could see. Elizabeth told Jesus about the things that made her happy and things that made her sad. Being part of God's family made life worth living. God's son, Jesus, was always there to talk to when no one else was, or when no one else understood.

**Prayer:**

Jesus, thank you that you are so close to us; that you listen to us, and understand us when we pray. Thank you that you can hear the ideas in our heads. Jesus, this is what I want to tell you about right now. (pause) Thank you for listening, Jesus. Thank you for loving me. Amen.