

Planning

LECTIONARY

Ezekiel 34.11-16, 20-24, Psalm 100 or Psalm 123, Ephesians 1.15-23, **Matthew 25.31-46**

Context

The Church year concludes today by celebrating the reign of Christ the King. We do not, however, read of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem or the visit of wise men with their royal gifts, we hear Jesus words in Matthew 25: 'I was hungry and you gave me food, I was naked and you gave me clothing'.

Read Matthew 25.31-46 and reflect on it. Notes to help you understand this passage can be found on the **WEB** or in *Adult & All Age* magazine.

Common thread – Really a king? (Matthew 25.31-46)

The ROOTS resources this week explore the words of Jesus in Matthew 25, 'When I needed a neighbour were you there?' This is not a king who rides a chariot or reigns at a distance, it is a king who comes as a servant, whom we serve by our ministry to those in need.

Resources for the season

Season setting p.6; Prayers and music p.8; Drama and activities p.10; Art and craft p.12.

PLUS

Songs and music

King of Kings, Jarrod Cooper; *I want to serve the purpose of God*, Mark Altrogge; *O Sacred King*, Matt Redman; *I Will Offer up my Life*, Matt Redman.

More hymns and songs for this issue are listed on p.8.

Archive **WEB**

These readings were covered on 24.11.2002 and 20.11.2005.

ROOTS resources

Don't forget to look at pp.26-27 for additional suggestions for today and in ROOTS *Adult & All Age* magazine for further ideas for the whole worshipping community.

Films

Lion King **△** Many issues of kingship are covered within the film including the balance of friendship, fathership and leadership.

Princess Diaries 1 or 2 **△** A young princess discovers that she has a role to take the crown and leadership of a country she has never known, but what are the sacrifices she will have to make for her country? A good film to be shown on the fantasy view of leadership and not the reality.

Special Sunday

Some traditions mark today as *National Youth Sunday* www.nys.org.uk

REALLY A KING?

Gather

Gathering activity

A light-hearted leadership choice.

You will need: a variety of posters or pictures of famous people, or those known well by the young people in your group.

- As the group enter the room ask them to stick a star on the pictures of people whom they would vote on as King/Queen of the nation.
- If time allows ask them to discuss why they have made the choice they have. This can be kept quite light hearted or can go deeper depending on your group and time available.

Gathering prayer

We come into this place, Lord,
ready to listen,
ready to share,
ready to learn.
Amen.

Open the Word

Based on Matthew 25.31-46

Baa, Baa!

You will need: copies of the Matthew reading from *The Message* translation. (If you don't have a copy of this Bible then it can be easily sourced through www.biblegateway.com).

- Divide the young people into small groups, or work together depending on numbers.
- Give each group a copy of the reading.
- Ask the young people to work in small groups to produce a one minute drama, mime, dance or poster, illustrating the parable in this reading.
- Explain that their production will be used as a basis for discussion about the story.
- Once they have had time to prepare, invite the young people to present their work.
- In a time of discussion afterwards you might like to bring out the serving nature of the sheep, where love is in the story, is it easy to be a sheep? This activity is particularly useful for use with a group who find traditional learning styles difficult and instead prefer a kinesthetic approach.

Characteristics of a king

A reflection on leadership qualities.

You will need: digital camera and printer or paper and coloured pencils.

- As the young people enter the room take a photo of each child on a digital camera and print off onto normal inkjet paper in black and white. If you choose this option make sure you work within any agreed child protection policies that your group follows.
- Alternatively, give each person a blank sheet of paper and invite them to draw a self-portrait.
- Ask the young people to think about the reading and the different aspects of Jesus the King as described in the parable.
- Ask them to consider the characteristics mentioned in the reading and which they would see as being important if they were king or queen.
- Invite them to add these to their images.
- Some characteristics to discuss through with group could include: the judging nature of the King; the vulnerable nature; the giving nature; the need for loyal followers and what is needed to get these.
- Bring these ideas back then to ask the young people to consider their response to leadership and the true nature of Jesus' kingship.

Other ways of opening the Word are on p.26 and on the **WEB**.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Talk about

With some groups, you may need to allow time for some sheep jokes, before starting the discussion and activities!

- One of the big discussion points in Christianity is the debate between the nature of salvation through faith or works. Are we saved because we believe, or are we saved by our Christian actions?

What does this parable offer to the debate of faith vs. works?

Is faith enough?

Relating that to this parable, is faith all that the King requires?

What drives the desire to do good works?

- When the king separates the sheep and the goats he says that it is the sheep that please him.

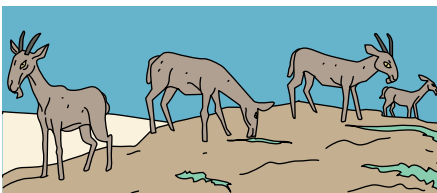
What is it in the sheep's behaviour/character that is favoured by the king?

Who lives or has lived a life that is a good role model of this that the king requires?

What sort of modern behaviour could be deemed to be 'sheep-like'?

What sort of modern behaviour could be deemed to be 'goat-like'?

- Mother Theresa lived a life as described as pleasing in the parable by devoting her whole life to giving to others in many ways, but we can't all live this kind of dramatic life.



What are the practical ways that we can live a sheep-like life? (This might include: being a friend to the lonely and bullied, collecting old clothes, games, books and bric a brac for charity shops, supporting charity appeals as a group or individual, providing practical support to elderly people in the community.)

Why does the king have to separate the sheep and goats?

What would happen if he simply left them all together?

Why does any king need to judge?

Respond to

A hand to serve

This activity is designed to encourage young people to think about the need for followers of Christ to serve.

You will need: an outline of a hand printed at A4 size, pens or pencils.

- Give each person a copy of a hand print.
- Go through each of the fingers inviting the young people to write their personal answers to the following questions. Encourage the young people to write down and think about smaller, achievable aims that they can put into practise straight away.

Thumb: Do you want to be a sheep or a goat?

Index finger: When is it hard to be a sheep in your life?

Middle finger: In what areas of your life do you need Jesus to help you to live more of a sheep life?

Ring finger: Name one practical way that you will go and live in a sheep-like way.

Little finger: Name one person you know that needs help.

Hand reflection

Follow-on to *A hand to serve*.

You will need: a recording of *O Sacred King*, by Matt Redman. This can be downloaded legally from many Internet sites as well as being found on the Father's Song CD; a PowerPoint™ photo montage of people from all parts of society in the world and the local community that require love, support and practical help.

- After the group have finished the activity *A hand to serve*, gather them together and ask them to meditate on the things that they have written.
- Play the track *O Sacred King*, encouraging the young people to look at their hand drawing as they listen.
- This time of reflection can be enhanced by a PowerPoint™ photo montage of people caring for others.

The circle of life

A reflection on Christ as judge.

You will need: The *Lion King* film  and means to play it; paper and pencils.

- Ask the young people if they have ever watched a nature documentary and seen animals being chased and killed by others higher up the food chain. This is the rule of the circle of life.
- Show a clip from the film. A suitable snippet could come in the first half of the movie when Mufassa is explaining to Simba about the circle of life and difficult decisions that have to be made as a king.
- Ask the young people to share their reactions to the idea of an ultimate Judge making tough decisions on those that ignore their neighbours need.
- Ask the young people to draw a journey they take often (to school, to church ...).
- Give the group time to look at their pictures and add a note to the areas where there are people in need in their community and how they can actively help people they may pass or know about.

Send out

Gather the group to pray.

Jesus, fill us with wisdom and revelation so that we might live in accordance to your ways.
Be the king of our lives.

Keep our eyes fixed on the hope we have through you.

Be the king of our future.

Help us to remember how powerful you are and that you hold all things in your hands.

May we trust you to be king of our lives.

Help us to see you in others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves.

Be the king in this world.

Thank you, that you are king over all, but not always a king as we know it.

Amen.

Don't forget to look at pp.26–27 for additional ideas. Seasonal material on pp.6–13 will be particularly useful in the next four weeks of the Advent.