



Diocese of Athabasca

Sunday School Lesson Plan – Sunday, September 27, 2026

Here's a **Sunday School Lesson Plan** for young children (ages 4–8) and some activities for older children using the **Revised Common Lectionary readings** for **September 27, 2026 – Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Year A)**. Bible Verses: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16; Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32; Preface of the Lord's Day

✨ Sunday School Lesson Plan

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 13, 2026

Based on the Revised Common Lectionary

- Exodus 17:1-7
- Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
- Philippians 2:1-13
- Matthew 20:1-16

Lesson Title: Show God's Love by What You Do

Theme: Listening to God and putting love into action.

Big Idea: Jesus teaches us that saying the right thing is not enough. God wants us to live out our faith through loving and helpful actions.

Lesson Focus for Kids:

- ♥ Jesus teaches us to love.
 - 👂 We can listen to God.
 - 👏 We can put love into action.
 - 😊 God helps us choose what is right.
-

Scripture Readings — Kid-Friendly Language

Exodus 17:1–7 — Water from the Rock

God's people were travelling through the wilderness.

It was hot and dry.

They became very thirsty, but there was no water to drink.

The people were worried and complained to Moses.

“What are we going to drink?”

Moses prayed to God for help.

God told Moses to go to a rock and strike it with his staff.

Moses did what God told him.

And something amazing happened.

Water came out of the rock!

There was enough water for the people to drink.

God had not forgotten them.

Kid Connection

When God's people needed help, **God provided what they needed.**

We can trust God and ask God for help.

Psalm 78:1–4, 12–16

Tell the Wonderful Stories

The psalm says:

“Listen to my teaching.”

It tells God's people to remember the wonderful things God has done and tell those stories to their children.

The psalm remembers how God:

- divided the sea,
- led the people,
- brought water from a rock,
- and cared for them in the wilderness.

Kid Connection

We tell Bible stories so that children can learn about God's love.

We can tell other people:

“Look what God has done!”

Philippians 2:1–13

Love and Help One Another

Paul told Jesus' followers to care about one another.

He said:

Don't think only about yourself.

Think about other people too.

Then Paul reminded them about Jesus.

Jesus did not try to make himself more important than everyone else.

Jesus became a servant.

He loved.

He helped.

He obeyed God.

Paul told the Christians:

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.”

Kid Connection

Jesus shows us how to live.

We can ask:

“What would be loving?”

“What would be helpful?”

And God helps us choose.

Matthew 21:23–32

Two Sons Make a Choice

Jesus told a story about a father who had two sons.

The father went to the first son and said:

“Please go and work in the vineyard today.”

The son answered:

“No! I won't go.”

But later he thought about it.

He changed his mind.

And he went to work.

Then the father asked his other son:

“Please go and work in the vineyard.”

The second son answered:

“Yes! I will!”

But he didn't go.

Jesus asked:

“Which son did what his father wanted?”

The answer was the first son.

At first he said no, but then he changed his mind and **did** what his father asked.

Kid Connection

Jesus teaches us that our **actions matter**.

It is good to say:

“**I will help!**”

But then we need to actually **help**.

It is good to say:

“**I will share!**”

But then we need to actually **share**.

It is good to say:

“**I love you.**”

And then we can show that love by what we do.

Welcome & Opening Prayer / Circle Time

Place a simple sign in the centre:

WORDS + ACTIONS

Ask the children to copy some simple actions.

Say:

“Touch your head.”

“Clap your hands.”

“Wave to a friend.”

“Give yourself a hug.”

Then deliberately say:

“I’m going to clap my hands,” but don’t clap.

Ask:

“Did I do what I said?”

No!

Explain:

“Today Jesus tells us a story about two people. One said he would do something but didn’t do it. The other changed his mind and did what was asked.”

Ask:

- What does it mean to help someone?
- Is saying “I’ll help” the same as actually helping?
- How can we show someone that we love them?
- Can we change our minds and make a better choice?

Emphasize:

Yes! God always helps us try again.

Opening Prayer

Dear God,

thank you for loving us.

Thank you for Jesus,
who shows us how to live.

Help us listen to you.

Help us use kind words.

Help us make loving choices.

Help us not only say
that we love others,
but show our love
by what we do.

Amen.

Memory Verse

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:5

For preschool children:

“Be like Jesus.”

Philippians 2:5

Actions

Let the same mind — point gently to your head.

be in you — point to yourself.

that was in Christ Jesus — make a simple cross with two fingers or point upward.

Finish by saying:

“Jesus helps me choose love!”

Bible Story Time

Which Son Really Helped?

Jesus was teaching people about following God.

He told them a little story.

There was once a father who had two sons.

One morning the father said to his first son:

“Please go and work in the vineyard today.”

The first son frowned.

Cross your arms.

“NO! I DON'T WANT TO!”

But later the son started thinking.

“Hmmm...”

Tap your finger on your chin.

He realized he had made the wrong choice.

So what did he do?

He changed his mind!

He went to the vineyard and worked.

Then the father went to his second son.

“Please go and work in the vineyard today.”

The second son smiled.

“YES! I WILL!”

But guess what?

He didn't go.

He said the right words, but he didn't do what he had promised.

Jesus asked:

“Which son did what his father wanted?”

The first one!

He made a bad choice at first, but he **changed his mind and made a better choice.**

Jesus wants us to understand that following God is about more than words.

Suppose you say:

“I'll help clean up!”

But then you leave all the toys on the floor.

Did your actions match your words?

No.

Suppose you say:

“I'll share!”

And then you give your friend a crayon.

Did your actions match your words?

Yes!

Jesus wants us to put love into action.

And here's more good news:

When we make a wrong choice, we can change our minds and try again!

Craft / Activity

Helping Hands for Jesus

Materials

- Construction paper
- Pencils
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue
- Crayons or markers
- Large cardstock heart

Trace each child's hand onto paper.

Cut out the handprints.

Ask each child:

“What can your hands do to show God's love?”

Write one idea on each hand:

- SHARE
- HELP
- HUG
- CLEAN UP
- GIVE
- WELCOME
- COMFORT
- PRAY

Glue the hands around a large heart.

In the centre write:

I CAN SHOW GOD'S LOVE!

At the bottom:

“Be like Jesus.” — Philippians 2:5

For younger children, prepare the hand shapes beforehand.

Game

Say It — Do It!

Have the children stand in an open space.

Call out an action.

“I will CLAP!”

Everyone claps.

“I will HOP!”

Everyone hops.

“I will WAVE!”

Everyone waves.

Then move to loving actions:

“I will HELP!”

Pretend to pick something up.

“I will SHARE!”

Pretend to hand something to a friend.

“I will WELCOME!”

Open your arms and smile.

“I will PRAY!”

Fold your hands.

After each action say:

“We said it AND we did it!”

Finish with:

“Jesus helps us put love into action!”

Song Suggestions

- **Jesus Loves Me**
- **This Little Light of Mine**
- **Jesus Loves the Little Children**
- **I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy**
- **They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love**
- **Praise Him, Praise Him, All Ye Little Children**
- **God Is So Good**
- **If You're Happy and You Know It**
- **I Have Decided to Follow Jesus**

For younger children, adapt *If You're Happy and You Know It*:

If you love like Jesus, lend a hand...

If you love like Jesus, share your toys...

If you love like Jesus, show you care...

Snack Suggestions

Water from the Rock

Connect the snack with Exodus 17.

Provide:

- Water to drink
- Rock-shaped crackers or round crackers
- Cheese
- Fruit

Say:

“God gave the thirsty people water in the wilderness. Water is one of God's wonderful gifts.”

Another option is a **Vineyard Snack** to connect with the Gospel:

- Age-appropriately cut grapes
- Crackers
- Cheese

Safety: Whole grapes can be a choking hazard. Cut grapes lengthwise appropriately for the children's ages and check all allergy requirements.

Wrap Up & Reflections

Ask:

What did the first son say?

“No.”

What did he finally do?

He went to work.

What did the second son say?

“Yes.”

Did he go?

No.

What was Jesus teaching us?

Our actions matter.

Ask:

- What can you do to show love?
- What can you do to help at home?
- What can you do to help at church?
- If you make a wrong choice, can you make a better choice next time?

YES!

Repeat:

I CAN LISTEN.

I CAN HELP.

I CAN LOVE.

I CAN TRY AGAIN.

JESUS HELPS ME!

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for showing us how to love. Help us listen. Help us choose kindness. Help us share. Help us serve. Help us care for others.

When we make a wrong choice, help us change our minds and try again.

May our words and our actions show your love. **Amen.**

Take-Home Idea

Love in Action Challenge

Send each child home with a card.

This Week I Can...

- ☐ **Help someone.**
- ☐ **Share something.**
- ☐ **Use kind words.**
- ☐ **Do something when I say I will.**
- ☐ **Make a better choice when I make a mistake.**

At the bottom:

♥️ SHOW GOD'S LOVE! ♥️

“Be like Jesus.” — Philippians 2:5

Teacher Notes

The parable of the two sons offers an excellent opportunity to teach young children about the relationship between **words and actions**.

Avoid reducing the story simply to:

“Good children obey.”

The parable has a deeper message. Jesus was speaking to religious leaders who said they followed God but did not respond faithfully to God's work through John the Baptist.

For young children, two important truths can be emphasized:

1. Our actions should match our words.
2. We can change our minds and make a better choice.

The second point is especially valuable. The first son initially made the wrong choice, but that wasn't the end of his story.

Children need to hear:

“A wrong choice does not mean you cannot make a better choice next.”

Philippians 2 adds another important dimension. Christian action isn't about proving that we are “good.” We seek to live like Jesus—humble, loving, generous, and concerned for others.

For Exodus 17, acknowledge that the people were genuinely thirsty. Rather than portraying them simply as “complainers,” focus on their need, Moses' prayer, and God's provision.

Anglican Connection

Our Baptismal Promises

Today's lesson connects naturally with the **Baptismal Covenant**.

At Baptism, Christians make promises about how we will live as followers of Jesus.

Explain:

“At Baptism, we don't only say that we belong to Jesus. We promise to live like people who follow Jesus.”

For young children, summarize those promises:

With God's help, we will:



Love God.



Love other people.



Help others.



Make peace.



Care for God's world.

Emphasize the important Anglican response:

“I will, with God's help.”

We don't have to follow Jesus entirely through our own strength.

God helps us.

This connects beautifully with Philippians 2:13, which reminds us that **God is at work in us**.

Confession and Beginning Again

The first son changed his mind.

Connect this with confession.

Explain:

“Sometimes we make a wrong choice. In church, we can tell God that we are sorry. God forgives us and helps us begin again.”

Practice:

**I'm sorry, God.
Please forgive me.
Help me make a better choice.
Amen.**

Serving Like Jesus

Philippians describes Jesus as a servant.

Anglican worship sends us back into the world to serve God.

After worship, our job isn't finished.

We take God's love with us.

We show our faith at:



home,



school,



church,



the playground,



and wherever we go.

Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost



Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

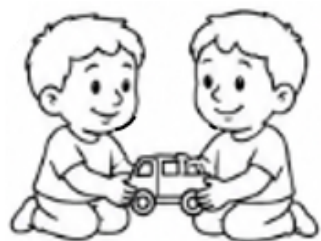
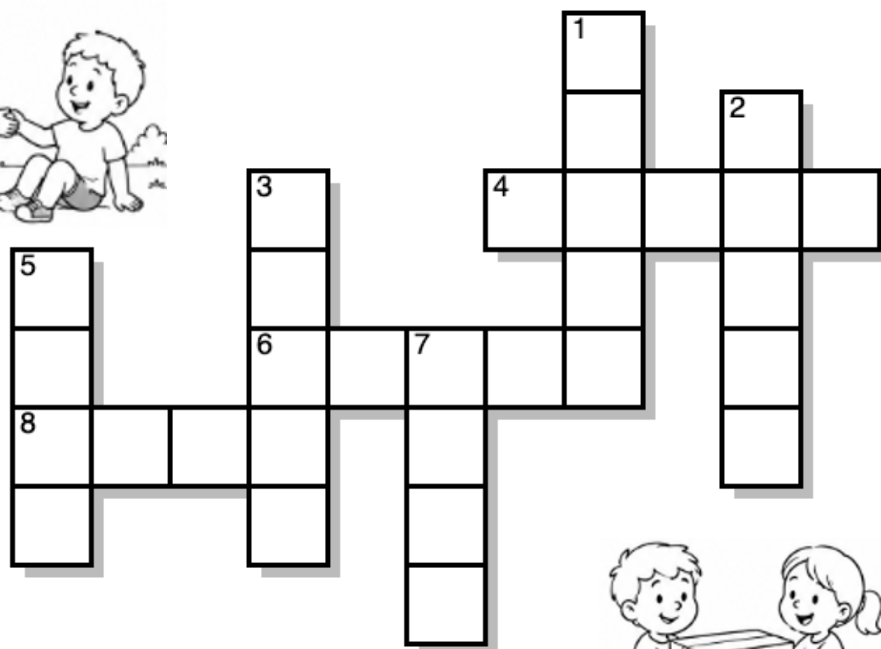
Which Child Did It?

Circle the child who puts love into ACTION.



Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost



ACROSS

- 4 God gave the thirsty people this to drink.
- 6 Another word for caring for and helping others.
- 8 Jesus teaches us to show this to everyone.



DOWN

- 1 We can _____ what we have with someone else.
- 2 He shows us how to love.
- 3 God told this man to strike the rock.
- 5 When someone needs us, we can _____.
- 7 The water came from a _____.



Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

R X Q S R G L Y S
S H A R E I N E N
W L K Y S R S T L
A Y O T R O V H Y
T S E V M O E E K
E N U B E L C I N
R D B S P Y N K T
Z V K D E D B L L
X M L Q M J M Z N

JESUS
LOVE
HELP
SHARE
SERVE

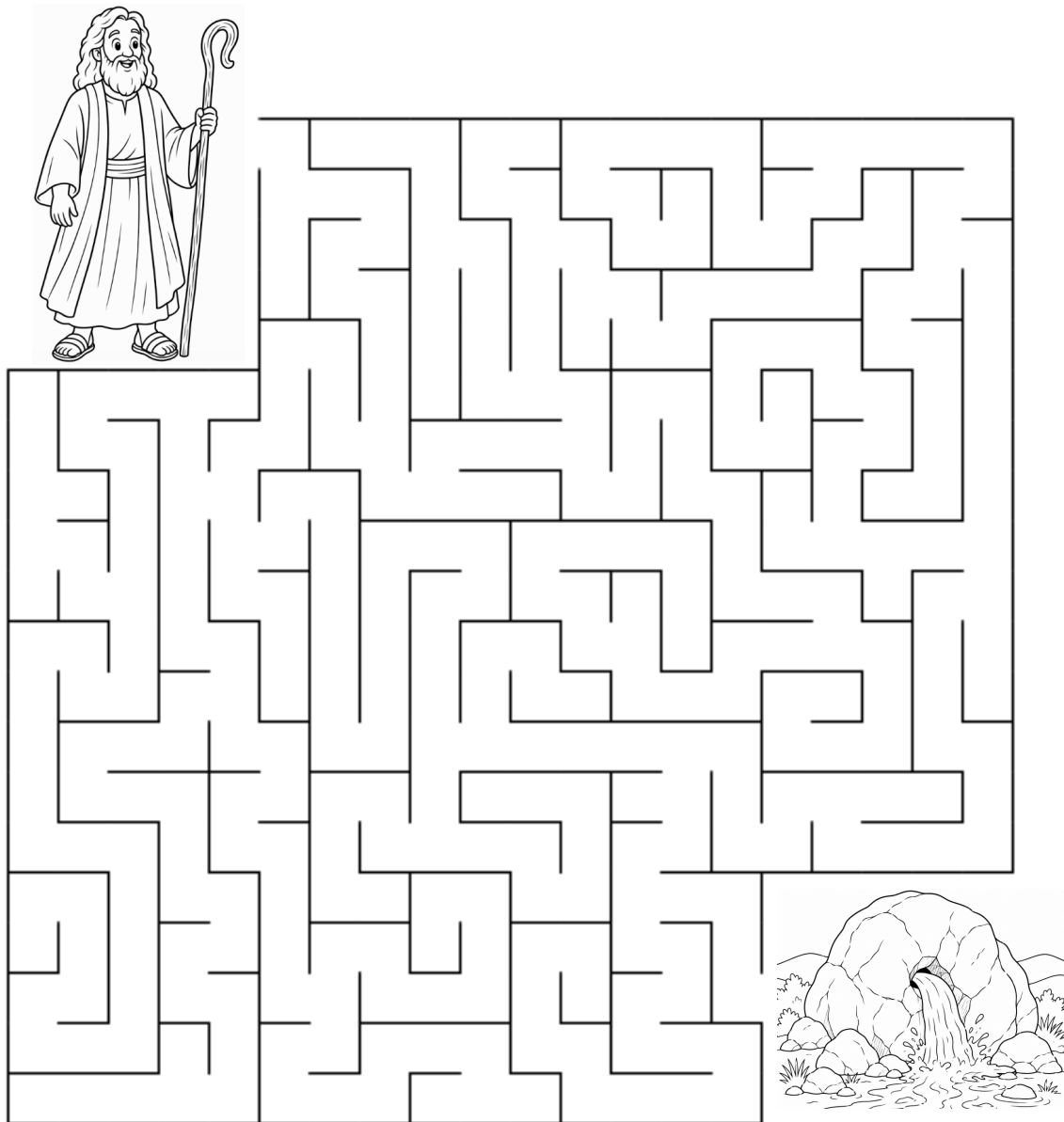
MOSES
WATER
ROCK
LISTEN
KIND



Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Help the man collect all the grapes and bring them to the basket.



Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

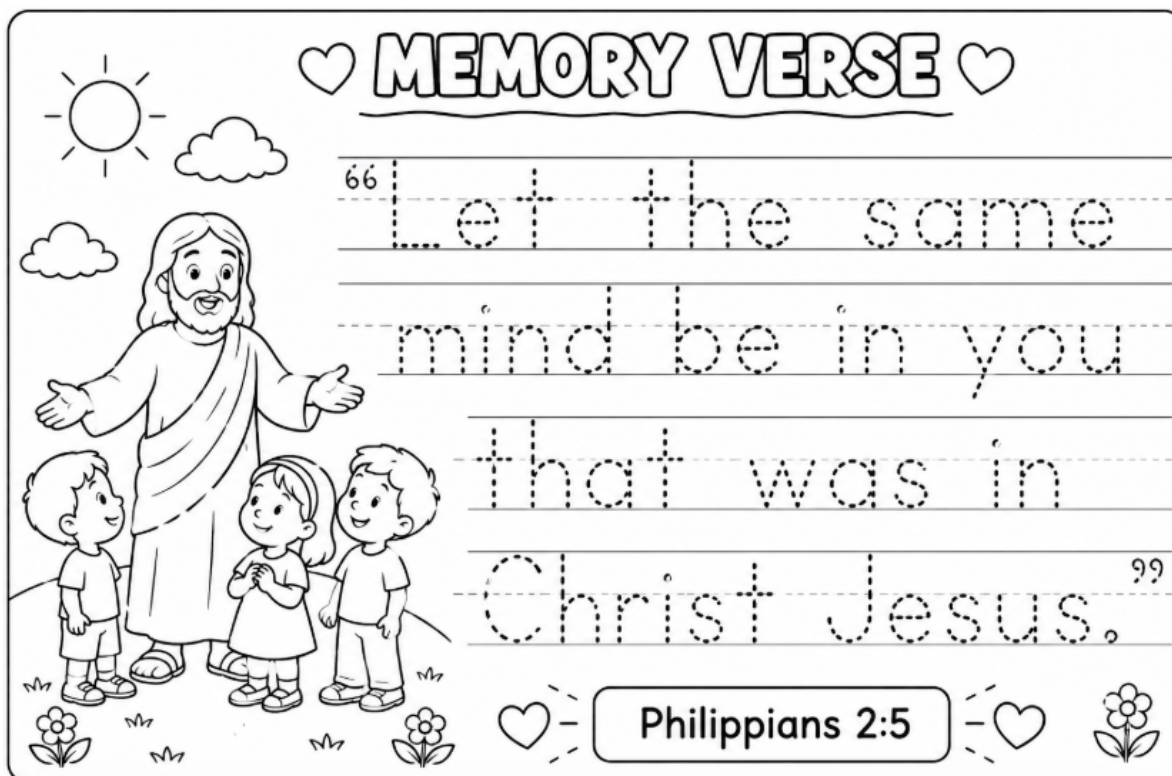
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<u>20</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>13</u>				<u>25</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>				<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>											
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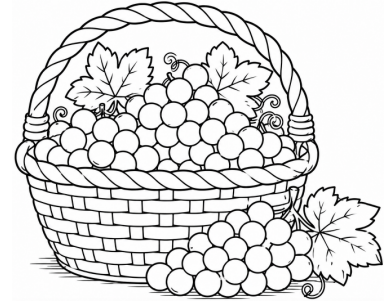


Show God's Love by What You Do

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Fill in the blanks of the story with the words in the box.

Words to Use			
father	mind	Jesus	No
two	vineyard	went	yes



The Two Sons

Jesus told a story about a _____ who had _____ sons.

One day the father said to his first son: "Please go and work in the _____."

The first son said: "_____, I will not go!"

But later he changed his _____. He _____ to work in the vineyard.

The father asked his second son to work. The second son said: "_____, I will!" But he did not go.

_____ asked which son really did what his father wanted.

The first son did!

He changed his mind and made a better choice.

Finish the Story. On the back of this page draw a picture underneath of the first son working in the vineyard. At the bottom of the picture write: **I CAN MAKE A BETTER CHOICE!**

Crossword - Key

Across

4. Gift

6. Vineyard

8. Jesus

Down

1. God

2. Thanks

3. Grapes

5. Help

7. Rock

Cryptogram – Key:

Philippians 2:4-5

Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Fill-in-the-Blank – Key

The Two Sons

Jesus told a story about a **father** who had **two** sons.

One day the father said to his first son: “Please go and work in the **vineyard**.”

The first son said: “**No**, I will not go!”

But later he changed his **mind**. He **went** to work in the vineyard.

The father asked his second son to work. The second son said: “**Yes**, I will!” But he did not go.

Jesus asked which son really did what his father wanted.

The first son did!

He changed his mind and made a better choice.