

Martin Luther and the Reformation Rotation Sunday School Lessons

Rotation Model Sunday School is a program where hands-on, activity-based learning is employed to engage students with Bible stories and faith topics. The key is repeating the same story for multiple weeks, thereby giving time for repetition and reinforcement of the students' learning. For more information on the Rotation Model of Sunday School, please visit www.rotation.org.

This rotation-style curriculum has six weeks of lessons for two different age groups. The younger set of lessons is suggested for students in preschool through second grade, and the older set is for students in third grade through sixth grade. These are guidelines – feel free to use these lessons as best fits your particular congregational context.

The lesson set is focused on Martin Luther and the Reformation in Germany. Each set of lessons includes a lesson in Art, Music, Games, Drama, Publication and Movies. The students will hear each week a different facet of the story of Martin Luther's rediscovery of the Good News of God's forgiveness and love for us. The lessons will introduce the students to a basic timeline of Luther's life, Luther's "Coat of Arms," Luther's hymnody, Luther's Small Catechism, and the basics of Law and Gospel. A basic outline of the curriculum is below.

I am excited to hear how these lessons are used in congregations and to hear any feedback from those who use these lessons. Please feel free to e-mail me at astamp001@luthersem.edu with any questions or comments you have on these lessons.

Prepared by Rev. Amanda Applehans, Co-Pastor of River of Life Ministries of Sanders County, Montana.

Workshop	Pre-K-2nd Grade	3rd-6th Grade
Art	Learn about Luther's Coat of Arms and make shrinky-dink Luther Roses.	Learn about Luther's Coat of Arms and design your own using Christian symbols.
Music	Learn about Luther's hymnody and play "A Mighty Fortress" on color-coded, 1 octave instruments (bells, xylophone, etc.).	Learn about Luther's hymnody and write a song telling of God using a familiar tune.
Games	Learn about Luther's life through games focused on different parts of the story.	Learn about Luther's life through games focused on different parts of the story.
Drama	Interact with an adult dressed as Martin Luther and listen as an adult interviews him.	Interact with an adult dressed as Martin Luther and listen as an adult interviews him (using questions thought up by the students).
Publication	Learn about the printing press and its importance to the Reformation, and stamp cards that say "God Loves You" and "You are Forgiven" to hand out to congregation members.	Learn about the printing press and its importance to the Reformation, and stamp cards that say "God Loves You" and "You are Forgiven" to hand out to congregation members.
Movie	Learn about the life and times of Martin Luther by watching the Luther movie sponsored by Thrivent in 2003. (You may want to do this lesson first as an introduction to the unit.)	Learn about the life and times of Martin Luther by watching the Luther movie sponsored by Thrivent in 2003. (You may want to do this lesson first as an introduction to the unit.)

Lesson Template

Title

Main Goal

Preparation

Prayer

Story

Lesson

Wrap-up

Closing

Pre-K – 2nd Grade Art Rotation

Main Goal– The student will create a shrinky-dink of the Luther Rose and will learn the symbolism behind each part of the rose.

Preparation

First read Luther's explanation of his coat of arms (in the Wikipedia article on the Luther rose), then prepare a visual of the Luther rose in which each part can be discussed individually (this would be particularly effective if each piece would detach from the other pieces and you could show it to the students by itself – check out <http://www.goodshepherd.nb.ca/seal/>). Also trace the Luther Rose on a piece of shrinky-dink plastic for each of your students, and punch a hole in them so they can be threaded on a piece of ribbon to hang. The students will color the symbol during the lesson time. You will also need something to heat the shrinky-dinks with – a toaster oven usually works just fine.

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. As we learn how you were present with Martin Luther, remind us that you are always present with us as well, and that you always love us. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen”

Story

Begin by using the visual of Luther's rose and asking if anyone has seen it before (it might be in your church somewhere – you may want to take the students and show it to them, if possible). Explain to them that this is a symbol that Martin Luther designed to remind him of God's great love for him.

There are 5 parts to the symbol

Cross – Black – Reminds us of Jesus's death for us

Heart – Red – Reminds us our hearts, which are kept alive by God's love for us

Rose – White – Reminds us that faith in Jesus brings joy and peace.

Background – Blue – Reminds us of the sky, and the joys to be found in heaven with Jesus

Ring – Gold – Reminds us of the eternal nature of God and the eternal life promised to us

Use the different pieces of the symbol to quiz the students on what each piece is supposed to remind us of. Start in order, but progress to asking in more random fashion as the students progress.

Lesson

Once the students have a grasp on the different parts of the symbol, it is time to color their own Luther Roses. Give each student a piece of shrinky-dink plastic with the outline of the Luther Rose on it and access to permanent markers (you may want to use paint shirts for this part of the lesson). When they are finished coloring the plastic, put it onto a foil-lined sheet and into the oven (or toaster oven). When the plastic flattens out, take it out of the oven, reminding the children not to touch them, as they will be hot!

Wrap-up

While the students are waiting for their shrinky-dinks to cool, go over the different parts of the Luther Rose with them again. When the plastic is cool, help the students thread them onto a ribbon and tie a knot so they can be hung in their room.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for being always near and for Jesus's death that gives us the promise of eternal life.

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Pre-K – 2nd Grade Music Rotation

Main Goal – The students will learn the story told by Luther’s hymn, “A Mighty Fortress,” as they learn to play it on a 1-octave instrument.

Preparation

This lesson will include either working together to play “A Mighty Fortress” on a set of hand bells as a group, or learning individually how to play the hymn on a small colored xylophone. If you have a set of hand bells and enough children in the class to play them (4-8) then you will likely want to use a hand bell set. If you have a very small group, you might want to work with a xylophone for each student. You will also likely want to write out the music, color-coding it to match whatever instrument you will be using. You may also want to ask if the students could play their song during the worship service that day.

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Help us to remember that you are a strong fortress ready to protect us in this world and care for us no matter what happens. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen”

Story

Start by playing the hymn, “A Mighty Fortress,” for the students, and ask if they have heard it before. Tell them it was written by Martin Luther, who we are studying this session. Let them know that Luther wrote many hymns, some of which have been translated from German into English and are in the book we sing from today. “A Mighty Fortress” tells us of our God who is strong and always there to fight on our side when we are in trouble. At this point you may want to go through the hymn line by line and explain the story it tells to the students (more info on the hymn in the ELW hymnal companion).

Lesson

During this section of the class you will work with the students to play the hymn on a xylophone or set of hand bells. (There is one accidental in the hymn, and it will need to be lowered to fit into the scale, because you won’t have that note on your instrument if you use a single octave xylophone.) Be sure to practice several times through!

Wrap-up

Ask the children if they can remember a time when they had to do something hard, and allow some time for sharing. Remind the students that Martin Luther wrote this hymn to remind us that we have a very strong God who we can trust to help us when things are hard or we are scared. We can always pray to God and ask him for help, no matter what is happening in our life.

Closing

Pray a prayer to God that asks for him to be with us always, especially when things are hard or when we are scared.

A Mighty Fortress for Xylophone

For those who cannot read music, this notation should help you to play “A Mighty Fortress” with your kids on a one octave xylophone. The 8 marks the highest note on the xylophone, and the 1 is the lowest note (the note above the “ic” in “satanic” is supposed to be sharp, so may sound a bit off, but it should work ok!). You may want to label the student’s xylophones with numbers 1-8 to help them play.

8 8 8 5-6 7 8-7 6 5
A might - y for - - tress is - our God,

8 7 6 5 6 4-3-2 1
A sword and shield vic to - - rious;

8 8 8 5-6 7 8-7 6 5
He breaks the cru - el op - pres - - sor’s rod,

8 7 6 5 6 4-3-2 1
And wins sal - va - tion glo - - rious

1 3 5 6 4 5
The old sa - tan - ic foe

1 5 5 6 7 8
Has sworn to work us woe!

7 8 7 6 6 5
With craft and dread - ful might

6 6 5 6 4 3
He arms him - self to fight.

8 7 6 5 6 4-3-2 1
On Earth he has no eq - - ual

Prepared by Rev. Amanda Applehans, Co-Pastor of River of Life Ministries of Sanders County, Montana.

Pre-K – 2nd Grade Games and Snack Rotation

Main Goal – The students will know what the 95 theses and the Diet of Worms are, and will be introduced to one of the most commonly used pictures of Martin Luther.

Preparation

There are several games for this session, and the children will also have a snack. For the snack, find whatever “dirt cup” pudding snack recipe online looks like it will work best for your class, and have the ingredients prepared for the children to make the snack.

For the games you will want to print off Luther’s picture and his hat. Cut them out (do a google search on Luther and use whatever picture looks best to you). Put the face on a bulletin board or piece of stiff cardboard and either put double-sided tape on the hat or give the students tacks to push into the board. This game will also need a blindfold.

For the “theses on the door” game you will need a door and some nails and some hammers (you may want to choose toy hammers, tacks and a thick cardboard or bulletin board “door” that you can attach to the wall for children of this age group).

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. We thank you for people of all times and places who are willing to stand up and preach the good news of your love for us. Help us to learn more about the Reformation during our class today. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen.”

Story

The story for today will be presented by reading the book, Martin Luther: A Man Who Changed the World by Paul Maier. Read the book to the students, then reinforce the story with questions pertaining to the trial (Diet) in Worms and the 95 Theses.

- Where did Martin Luther teach? (Wittenberg)
- Where did Luther look for evidence about purgatory and indulgences? (in the Bible)
- Luther wrote 95 Theses (concerns) about the church that he wanted to talk about. Where did he post them? (on the church door)
- The emperor was angry because of Luther’s writing. He was called to a trial (also called a “Diet”) in a town called Worms. Did Luther take back what he had written? (No – here you may want to read again Luther’s words to the emperor on this page)
- Luther got married later in his life, do you remember the name of his wife? (Katie)

Lesson

Start lesson time by mixing up the pudding for the snack (unless you plan to use already prepared pudding).

While the pudding is setting up, have the students play the two games. Begin with “Pin the Hat on Luther.” Show the students the picture and explain that this is one of the best known paintings of Martin Luther – this is what he actually looked like! Blindfold the students one by one, spin them a couple of times, point them at the picture of Luther and let them pin his hat on.

Pre-K – 2nd Games and Snack Rotation (continued)

Lesson (continued):

The next activity is nailing our theses to the church door. Explain that Luther nailed up things about the church that he wanted to talk about. Have the students draw a picture of something about church that they might like to talk about. Then when they are ready, give them tacks and hammers to “nail” their “theses” to the church door.

Wrap-up

When the students are finished with the games, come back together and let the students mix the remaining ingredients into the pudding. Spoon it into small cups for them and garnish with the cookie crumb “dirt.” Ask the students if they can remember the town where Luther met with the emperor (use a worm to help if you need). Give each child a couple of worms to put in their snack and tell them every time they see gummy worms they can remember Martin Luther and how he bravely stood up for what he believed at the Diet of Worms. Let the students eat their snack, and help them clean up as they finish.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for sending brave people who will preach God’s message of love even when it is difficult for them.

Prepared by Rev. Amanda Applehans, Co-Pastor of River of Life Ministries of Sanders County, Montana.

Pre-K – 2nd Grade Drama Rotation

Main Goal – The students will learn about Martin Luther’s life.

Preparation

For this lesson you will need to round up someone who is willing to dress up and play Martin Luther (the more the volunteer is willing to commit to the part, the better this will be!). You may also want to run through the interview a couple of times to familiarize yourselves with the content and to make things go more smoothly. This person will be answering questions as Luther, so s/he will need to familiarize him/herself with the life and times of Martin Luther (It would be great if “Luther” would commit to reading the book, Luther the Reformer by James Kittelson - otherwise, watching the Luther movie and reading the short children’s book, Martin Luther, A Man Who Changed the World by Paul L. Maier, and being creative when in a bind should work!). There may also be time for some learning pages along with this lesson (you can find these pretty easily on the internet).

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer, “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Be with us as we learn about Martin Luther and the ways that you were present with him during his life. In Jesus’s name, Amen.”

Story

The interview will be the story section for this time. Begin by introducing Martin Luther to the students and then have your interview.

Lesson

If you have a Luther scholar on hand, or if you have a volunteer who is up for the challenge, you could let the children ask questions of their own for Luther. After Luther leaves, ask the students the questions at the bottom of the interview page to check for learning. If there is still time, have them work on a learning sheet from the internet.

Wrap-up

As the students finish their learning sheets, ask a few questions about Luther and what they learned about his life during the interview. Be sure to emphasize that Luther wanted the world to know that God loves us because we are his children, not because of anything we do.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for sending people to tell us of his love and asking him to help us to share the message of his love with all those we meet this week.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN LUTHER

(A resource from the Rotation.org website)

Leader: Today we are going to talk with a very important person in the Lutheran church, his name is Martin Luther. The time that he lived in was called “The Reformation.” That is a big word that comes from the smaller word – “reform.” The word “reform” means “to change.” We’ll talk more about that after our interview with Mr. Luther.

Enter Martin Luther

Leader: Good morning, Mr. Luther.

Luther: Good morning and good morning, children.

Leader: Mr. Luther, we would like to hear more about the Reformation and your part in it. Would you please tell us a little about yourself?

Luther: Sure, I was born in 1483 in Saxony. My father was a miner and foundry owner. I was a very good student in school. My father wanted me to be a lawyer, so I decided to go to law school.

Leader: What was it like in Saxony at that time?

Luther: Well, it was not a good time – many had died because of the Plague, a very serious illness. Many of us lost loved ones. Death seemed to be everywhere.

Leader: That doesn’t sound good at all.

Luther: Yes, it was very bad.

Leader: How did you become a monk? You were studying to be a lawyer, right?

Luther: Yes, I was studying to be a lawyer. Until one day a flash of lightning struck me to the ground. It scared me so badly that without even talking to my father, I decided to become a monk in the Catholic Church.

Leader: Wow, I bet that was scary. So what happened next?

Luther: Well, because of my near-death experience, I began to have feelings of not being good enough. I knew that if I died that very minute that I would not be able to stand before God and to go heaven. I knew I would be judged and found guilty of sin. I tried everything to feel good enough. I climbed the Scala Sancta - 28 stairs!! The custom, in my day, was to kiss each stair in order to release a soul from purgatory. But when I reached the top, I discovered that I was still in doubt of my worthiness.

Leader: But we are all sinful, right? How can any of us not be found guilty?

Luther: That is when I began to read the Bible and I learned much.

Leader: Tell us what you learned, please.

Luther: I found that man, us, is sinful and can do nothing about our salvation, but Jesus can. He died to save us - we can be saved, or justified, by faith alone nothing more.

Leader: Wow! That is great news!!

Luther: Yes, it is. The Catholic Church during my time was teaching that we could do “things” or “stuff” to get ourselves into heaven, but the Bible teaches us that faith in Jesus is the only path to heaven.

Leader: But shouldn't we do things or good works or something to please God?

Luther: Oh, yes, we should - I am not saying that you shouldn't. It is out of love for God that we want to serve Him and do good works. But we can't rely on these works to open the door to heaven for us. Only faith in Jesus can do that.

Leader: I bet the people of your time did not like what you were saying, did they?

Luther: No, they did not. I had to hide in a castle for a whole year because they were so upset. But God was there beside me, keeping me safe the whole time.

Leader: A whole year. Wow! So what did you do in that castle for an entire year?

Luther: Well, I wrote many papers and I even translated the New Testament into German, so everyone could read it. Before this, it was only written in Latin.

Leader: You kept pretty busy then.

Luther: Yes, I did. So may I ask the children a question?

Leader: Yes, you may.

Luther: Thanks. So children, how do we receive the gift of heaven?

Children: By believing that Jesus died for our sins. *(You may need to help them with this.)*

Luther: That's exactly right.

Leader: Well, Mr. Luther, we realize that you are a very busy man, so we will let you get back on your journey. Thank you so much for taking the time to come and visit with us today.

Luther: Well, you are very welcome. Thank you for letting me come in to talk to the wonderful children here at _____ *(name of church)*.

Leader: Let's tell Mr. Luther thank you for coming to visit us today.

Children: THANK YOU!!

Luther exits.

Leader: Many things changed during Martin Luther's time. Can anyone tell me what some of those changes or reforms were?

There are many different answers to this question

1. how people believed
2. their faith in Jesus; people began to believe that Jesus was the only way to heaven
3. Works were still important but not a way to heaven
4. People began to read the Bible in a language they could read

PreK – 2nd Grade Publishing Rotation

Main Goal – The students will understand how a printing press works and why it was important to the Reformation.

Preparation

In preparation for this lesson you will want to watch the Luther movie (2003 Thrivent edition), and read up on the history of the printing press (Wikipedia has a good article that gives the basics). Gather blank cards, rubber stamps (for words: “God Loves You” and “You are Forgiven”), stamp pads, crayons/colored pencils, and items to decorate the cards.

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Help us as we learn about all the different ways that technology can help us get out the word about your love to all the world. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen”

Story

For the story section of this lesson you will be showing a section of the Luther movie put out by Thrivent in 2003. Begin the clip at the start of scene 8 (when Martin is talking with Hannah about the indulgence) and stop when Luther is preaching in the church. After the clip, draw students’ attention to the printing sections of the clip. Did they see the big machine with the crank? Explain that the students had taken Luther’s theses down to print many copies of them so more people could read them. After the public had read Luther’s theses, the men who were selling indulgences were having a hard time making money. Luther became well-known quickly, and because of his fame it was harder for the church to get rid of him.

Lesson

Explain to the students that the printing press made it possible for us to have books in our homes like we do. Printing makes many copies much faster than handwriting them. Today we are going to press words onto a card so we can share God’s love with someone. Give each child a couple of blank cards and access to stamps and stamp pads. Encourage them to use stamps and other art supplies as available.

Wrap-up

As the students finish up their cards, have them help you clean up. Remind the students that Martin Luther and his students used the technology available in their day to spread the word about God’s love. We can use everything we do as a way to share the message of God’s love as well! The cards can be given out to the congregation.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for technology and all the different ways that we can spread God’s love to those who need to hear the message.

PreK – 6th Grade Movie Rotation

Main Goal – The students will have an understanding of who Luther is and will have curiosity to learn more about him.

Preparation

To prepare for this lesson you will want to preview the Luther movie. It is a 2 hour movie, so you may need to make decisions about what parts you might want to skip, or show the movie for two weeks.

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Thank you for all the faith role models you have given us, our parents and grandparents, our church families, and historical figures like Martin Luther. Help us to live faithful lives like they do. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen”

Story and Lesson

The story and lesson this week are basically watching the movie.

Wrap-up

You may want to wrap up the lesson with a recap of what we saw in the movie and an explanation of what is coming in the Luther Rotation Unit.

Closing

Close with a prayer of thanks for all the faithful people God puts in our lives to show us his way and asking him to help us follow their example.

3rd – 6th Grade Art Rotation

Main Goal – The students will know the background of the Luther Rose symbol and will understand the importance of symbolism in the life of faith.

Preparation

Before this lesson you will want to read over the Wikipedia article on the Luther Rose and Luther's explanation of it, and gather materials for children to make their own coat of arms from. Sizes and materials are your choice – you could use poster board, fun foam, construction paper, or crayons and white paper. You will also want to have some samples of Christian symbols and their common meanings (consider using some of the banners or altar paraments from your church for this). The more creative you can be in your preparation, the more creative the children will be! You may also want to prepare a visual of the Luther Rose in which each part can be discussed individually (this would be particularly effective if each piece would detach from the other pieces and you could show it to the students by itself – check out <http://www.goodshepherd.nb.ca/seal/>).

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Be with us as we learn about the symbols that people throughout time have used to remind themselves of your love for them. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen”

Story

Begin by using the visual of Luther’s Rose and asking if anyone has seen it before (it might be in your church somewhere – you may want to take the students and show it to them, if possible). Explain to them that this is a symbol that Martin Luther designed to remind him of God’s great love for him.

There are 5 parts to the symbol

Cross – Black – Reminds us of Jesus’s death for us

Heart – Red – Reminds us our hearts, which are kept alive by God’s love for us

Rose – White – Reminds us that faith in Jesus brings joy and peace.

Background – Blue – Reminds us of the sky, and the joys to be found in heaven with Jesus

Ring – Gold – Reminds us of the eternal nature of God and the eternal life promised to us

Use the different pieces of the symbol to quiz the students on what each piece is supposed to remind us of. Start in order, but progress to asking in more random fashion as the students progress.

Lesson

Once the students have a grasp on the different parts of the Luther Rose, it’s time to let them create their own symbol to remind them of God’s love for them. Show the different sample symbols you have, and ask the children if they can think of any things that would remind them of a story of God’s love for them. Let the children know they can use any shapes, colors, or pictures that remind them of God’s love. Hand out the materials and let them create their symbols.

Wrap-up

As the students begin to finish, have them share with one another what they have chosen as their symbol and how it reminds them of God’s love for them. Encourage the students to take their symbols home and share the story of God’s love with their families, and hang they symbols somewhere they will see them so they can be reminded how much God loves them.

Closing

Close with a prayer that thanks God for his great love for us and asks that he remind us that he is with us as we head out into the world this day and every day.

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3rd – 6th Grade Music Rotation

Main Goal – The students will be exposed to the hymn “A Mighty Fortress,” and will learn that through music we carry the story of God’s love for us in our minds and hearts.

Preparation

In preparation for this lesson you will want to read Psalm 46 and do some study on the background of the hymn “A Mighty Fortress.” You may also want to have an instrument that you (or a helper) can play simple tunes on, or a music-only recording of some simple tunes that the students can choose from for writing their song. You may also want to try writing a song on your own ahead of time so that you have something in your back pocket if the students get stuck! You may also want to ask the worship leaders for the day if you can sing the children’s song during worship.

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Help us to remember that you are a strong fortress ready to protect us in this world and care for us no matter what happens. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen.”

Story

Start by reading Psalm 46 to the students. Ask what the writer wants us to know about God (hint – check vs. 1). Next, play the hymn, “A Mighty Fortress” for the students, and ask if they have heard it before. Tell them it was written by Martin Luther, who we are studying this session. Let them know that Luther wrote many hymns, some of which have been translated from German into English and are in the book we sing from today. “A Mighty Fortress” was based on Psalm 46, and both the song and the psalm tell us of our God who is strong and always there to fight on our side when we are in trouble. At this point you may want to go through the hymn line by line and explain the story to the students (there is some information on this in the ELW Hymnal Companion, and you can find explanations online as well– but be sure to use words your students will understand).

Lesson

Tell the students that when Luther wrote his hymns he used tunes that people already knew, and tunes that were simple to sing and easy to remember. This made them a great way to put the message of God’s love into their minds and hearts. Tell the students today they will be writing a simple song that will share the message of God’s love.

Start by making a list of what things they want to say about God.

You can tell a story from the Bible (like The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock), or you can use a more concept-driven approach (like Jesus Loves Me).

Next, choose a hymn tune.

You can use a nursery rhyme, a common children’s song, or a song you know from church.

Finally, put your text to the tune in a way that is memorable.

You can use repetition, rhyming, alliteration, or a combination!

Wrap-up

As time draws to a close, sing your song through a couple of times and let the children know if you have arranged for them to sing during worship. Ask the students where they could sing this song during the week to remember God’s love for them.

Closing

Pray a prayer thanking God for always being with us, and ask him to remind us of his presence, especially when things are hard or when we are scared.

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3rd – 6th Grade Games and Snack Rotation

Main Goal – The students will learn the major points of the biography of Martin Luther.

Preparation

Prepare for this lesson by finding a simple recipe online for a “dirt cup.” Gather all the materials to prepare this snack (including gummy worms, of course!) and acquiring and reading the book, Martin Luther: A Man Who Changed the World, by Paul L. Maier. Prepare the Jeopardy Game (from rotation.org on p. 17 of this curriculum).

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. We thank you for people of all times and places who are willing to stand up and preach the good news of your love for us. Help us to learn more about the Reformation during our class today. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen.”

Story

The story for today will be presented by reading the book, Martin Luther: A Man Who Changed the World, by Paul L. Maier. Read the book to the students, then reinforce the story with questions pertaining to the trial (Diet) in Worms and the 95 Theses.

- Where did Martin Luther teach? (the University at Wittenberg)
- Why was Luther upset about the church’s teachings on indulgences and purgatory? (because he could not find evidence for them in scripture)
- What did Luther do with his list of 95 Theses (concerns) for the church? (He nailed them to the church door in Wittenberg)
- Because he posted his concerns, Luther was called before the emperor for a trial (Diet) in what city in Germany? (Worms)
- Did Luther take back what he had written? (No – you may want to read Luther’s words to the emperor on this page for the students again at this point)

Lesson

Begin by preparing the pudding for the snack we will have later in the lesson. While the snack is setting up, play the Jeopardy game with the students.

Wrap-up

When you’re finished with Jeopardy, have the students help you mix in the remaining ingredients for the snack, then spoon into their cups and garnish with cookie crumb “dirt.” Ask the students what town Martin Luther’s trial before the emperor was in. When they guess Worms, give each student a couple of gummy worms to put into their dirt cup. While they eat their snack, explain that while this is a different “Diet of Worms” they are eating, they can remember each time they see a gummy worm that in the town of Worms Martin Luther stood up to the emperor and fought for God’s message of love and forgiveness – the Gospel. As the students finish eating, help them clean up.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for sending brave people who will preach God’s message of love even when it is difficult for them.

MARTIN LUTHER JEOPARDY GAME

(A resource from the Rotation.org website)

Questions/Answers for the Martin Luther Jeopardy Game

A Rose By Any Other Name

100: What color is the cross in the center? black

200: What color is the rose? white

300: What color is the heart? red

400: What color stands for heaven's sky? blue

500: What color stands for God always being my friend? gold

Places

100: In what country did Martin Luther live? Germany

200: Where did Martin go to meet with the Emperor? Worms

300: Where did Martin post his 95 Theses? Castle Church Wittenberg

400: What did the Emperor call Martin to when he said he was going to talk to him? Trial

500: Where did Martin Luther die? Eisleben

People

100: Who was Martin's wife? Katie

200: Who were Martin's parents? Hans and Margaret

300: What were those who protested against the church called? Protestants

400: What were the followers of Luther called? Lutherans

500: Who did the emperor say Martin was? A "Devil"

Lutheran-isms

100: What important thing did Luther do with the New Testament? Translated it into German

200: What did Luther teach about God? God loves us!

300: What did Luther post on the Castle door in Wittenberg? 95 Theses

400: What did Luther make to tell about what he believed (His theology)?

Luther's Rose/Seal

500: Where did Luther learn about God's love OR What did Luther translate into German? The Bible

ML Numbers

100: How old was Martin when he went to school? 4 1/2

200: In what year was Martin born? 1483

300: How many children did Martin and Katie have? 6

400: How many books had Martin written that the Emperor wanted to burn? 25

500: How many Theses did Martin nail on the Castle door in Wittenberg? 95

3rd- 6th Grade Drama Rotation

Main Goal – The students will learn about Martin Luther’s life.

Preparation

For this lesson you will need to round up someone who is willing to dress up and play Martin Luther (the more the volunteer is willing to commit to the part, the better this will be!). This person will be answering questions as Luther, so s/he will need to familiarize him/herself with the life and times of Martin Luther (it would be great if “Luther” would commit to reading the book, Luther the Reformer by James Kittelson. Otherwise, watching the Luther movie and reading the short children’s book, Martin Luther, A Man Who Changed the World by Paul Maier and being creative when in a bind should work!). There may also be time for some learning pages along with this lesson (you can find these pretty easily on the internet.).

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer, “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Be with us as we learn about Martin Luther and the ways that you were present with him during his life. In Jesus’s name, Amen.”

Story

Read the students a short, age appropriate biography of Martin Luther. After the story, have them sit down in groups of 2 or 3 and write down a few questions they would like to ask Martin Luther (encourage them toward what good questions might be if they get stuck). When the students have their questions ready, invite Dr. Luther in and let the students ask their questions to him. When their questions have all been answered, thank Dr. Luther for coming and discuss with the students what they learned during the interview.

Lesson

If there is still time after the interview, have the students work on one of the learning sheets from the resources section.

Wrap-up

As the students finish their learning sheets, ask a few questions about Luther and what they learned about his life during the interview. Be sure to emphasize that Luther wanted the world to know that God loves us because we are his children, not because of anything we do.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for sending people to tell us of his love and asking him to help us to share the message of his love with all those we meet this week.

3rd – 6th Grade Publishing Rotation

Main Goal – The students will understand how a printing press works and why it was important to the Reformation.

Preparation

In preparation for this lesson you will want to watch the Luther movie (2003 Thrivent edition), and read up on the history of the printing press (Wikipedia has a good article that gives the basics). Gather blank cards, rubber stamps (for words: “God Loves You” and “You are Forgiven”), stamp pads, crayons/colored pencils, and items to decorate the cards.

Prayer

Begin with this or a similar prayer – “Dear God, thank you for your Word, which we have come to study this morning. Help us as we learn about all the different ways that technology can help us get out the word about your love to all the world. In Jesus’s name we pray, Amen”

Story

For the story section of this lesson you will be showing a section of the Luther movie put out by Thrivent in 2003. Begin the clip at the start of scene 8 (when Martin is talking with Hannah about the indulgence) and stop when Luther is preaching in the church. After the clip, draw students’ attention to the printing sections of the clip. Did they see the big machine with the crank? Explain that the students had taken Luther’s theses down to print many copies of them so more people could read them. After the public had read Luther’s theses, the men who were selling indulgences were having a hard time making money. Luther became well-known quickly, and because of his fame it was harder for the church to get rid of him.

Lesson

Choose 2 volunteers for an experiment. We are going to make 5 copies of a saying, but we’re going to do it in different ways to see which is faster. The first volunteer will handwrite out “God Loves You” five times, and the second volunteer will make 5 copies of “God Loves You” but using stamps. Have them start and time them. When the experiment is over, talk about the pros and cons of handwriting vs. stamping/printing (creative expression vs. time/money advantages). Ask the students of other ways you can get words on paper (rubbing over raised letters, others?)

After the discussion, give each child a couple of blank cards and access to stamps and stamp pads. Tell them that they will each be making a card to share God’s love with someone else. Encourage them to use stamps and other art supplies as available.

Wrap-up

As the students finish up their cards, have them help you clean up. Remind the students that Martin Luther and his students used the technology available in their day to spread the word about God’s love. Ask them if there are any ways they could use technology to spread God’s love today. The cards can be given out to the congregation.

Closing

Close with a prayer thanking God for technology and all the different ways that we can spread God’s love to those who need to hear the message.

Resources

Teaching Children about Martin Luther and the Reformation

Books for Children

Martin Luther: A Man Who Changed the World by Paul L. Maier, illustrated by Greg Copeland (2004)

Martin Luther: What should I do? by Catherine Mackenzie, illustrated by Rita Ammassari (2010)

The Adventures of Martin Luther by Carolyn Bergt, illustrated by Art Kirchhoff (1999)

Did Martin Luther Go On a Diet of Worms? written and illustrated by Thuy Vu (2014)

Luther: Biography of a Reformer by Frederick Nohl (2003)

Luther, the Graphic Novel: Echoes of the Hammer by Susan K. Leigh, illustrated by Dave Hill (2011)

Books for Adults to aid in teaching

Luther the Reformer: The Story of the Man and His Career, Revised Edition by James Kittelson

This new revised edition is available from Amazon on July 1, 2016.

October 31, 1517: Martin Luther and the Day that Changed the World by Martin E. Marty (May 1, 2016)

Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses, edited by Stephen J. Nichols (2002)

Movies/Videos

Luther, DVD ©2003 (partially sponsored by Thrivent Financial; starring Joseph Fiennes)

Martin! God Loves You, DVD – available from www.Christianbook.com – simple, clear presentation for younger children – 30 minutes

(Teacher manual to go with DVD is also available from Creative Communications on next page)

Reformation Roots, video series for adults from Select Learning, www.selectlearning.org

Play set

Playmobil 6099 – Martin Luther – Special Edition – 500 Years of Reformation (available from Amazon)

Other Ideas/Sources

Flat Marty Luther – like Flat Stanley used by elementary school children; image of Martin Luther for children to color/dress and take pictures with on their travels (local or out-of-town), sharing with their congregation via bulletin board, email, Facebook, etc.

Milestones Ministry will have a Reformation Milestone Moment available soon plus another resource this fall.

Faith Inkubators: “Luther 500 Cross+Gen Resources” will be available soon – www.faithink.com

Augsburg Fortress/Sparkhouse

Curriculum for Tweens and Teens with Martin Luther & Reformation lessons:

- “Colaborate,” “Here We Stand,” “re:form” (faith formation series)

Upcoming Resources for Reformation 500th Anniversary

- *Reformation 500 Sourcebook: Anniversary Resources for Congregations* will be released on June 15, 2016, and contains dozens of ideas for celebrating. See the link below:
<http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/21657/Reformation-500-Sourcebook-Anniversary-Resources-for-Congregations>
- *Papa Luther* will release in August 2016; a very cool graphic novel for children and youth about the life of Luther told through the eyes of his children.
- There are Augsburg webinars about how to celebrate this milestone at www.gatherlearnlead.org
- An adult study called “Together in Grace” will also release in August 2016 in time for the Churchwide Assembly – at the Assembly there will be a call for churches to study Luther’s Catechism and Reformation 500 editions will be released.

(continued on next page)

Resources (continued)

Creative Communications - <http://www.creativecommunications.com>

- Martin Luther's Seal Reformation Bookmark (Product # LBK)
- "Singing and Praying with Martin Luther" – booklet (Product # SML)
- "Martin! A Drama in 9 Scenes" – a play for children (Product #ML3)
- Teacher's Manual for *Martin! God Loves You* DVD and play above (Product #ML2)

Workshop curriculum (Teaching Children about Martin Luther and the Reformation)
prepared by Rev. Amanda Applehans, astamp001@luthersem.edu

Workshop presenter on 6/4/2016 and resources compiled by Lorie Hughes
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Region 1 Network Advocate for the Christian Education Network of the ELCA

Christian Education Network of the ELCA

Clergy, church staff, church Christian education volunteers, retired Christian educators, and faith formation students are invited to join our organization!

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Vision Statement: Building a community which equips, encourages, and empowers those engaged in lifelong faith formation in a changing world by:

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