



Hope In
The Lord

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THE ORDER OF SERVICE

- I. Bell tap or organ voluntary as a signal for silence
- II. Singing
- III. The Apostles' Creed
- IV. Prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert
- V. Singing
- VI. Calling roll of officers and teachers
- VII. Responsive reading of the lesson text by school
- VIII. The Decalogue

THE LESSON

- I. Organ interlude while the classes are being arranged
- II. Class study of the lesson
- III. Warning bell—5 minutes
- IV. Closing bell—silence

THE CLOSING

- I. Singing
- II. Review and application of the lesson
- III. Secretary's report
- IV. The Church School Creed
- V. Singing
- VI. Benediction

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.



THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

I believe my A.M.E. Church School must grow and grow; and that I must make it a top priority to make it so. Every member a Christian, every Christian a worker, every worker trained so that a worker need not be ashamed. This we ask in Jesus' name.

SUFFERING FOR YOUR SAKE

LESSON SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 1:19-2:5

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 1:24-26; 2:1-5

Key Verse: To them God chose to make known how great among the gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27

Colossians 1:24-26; 2:1-5 (NRSV UE)

Colossians 1:24-26

24 I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church.

25 I became its minister according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,

26 the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints.

2:1-5

2:1 For I want you to know how greatly I strive for you and for those in Laodicea and for all who

have not seen me face to face.

2 I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ,

3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4 I am saying this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments.

5 For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your orderly conduct and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

WORD POWER!!!

- **Colossae (pronounced ka-loss-uh)** – The city where the Colossian church presides.
- **Laodicea (pronounced lay-oh-dye-see-ah)** – A city that was a few miles northwest of Colossae. The church in this city was probably started by someone Paul mentored.
- **Gentiles** – People who are not Jewish.
- **Mentor** – Someone who guides someone else, gives help or advice over time so they can be more confident about doing a task or job.

GETTING READY!!!

Toni was having a tough time staying hopeful. She sprained her ankle last week so she could not spend time together with her friends at recess. Next, her older sister went to study and live in another country for three months which left Toni at home alone with her parents. Plus, someone else got picked to sing the lead to her favorite song at church.

Just when Toni was about to believe things would not get better, her best friend sent her a special playlist. It contained some of Toni's favorite songs. After listening to it, Toni felt a lot better. Feeling revived, she decided to pass her new reason to hope along by sending something to her older sister.

What do you think Toni sent her older sister? _____

INTO GOD'S WORD!!!

Paul does something difficult in today's letter. He chooses not to lose his hope in God, by encouraging others not to lose hope either. He could not visit the churches founded by people he mentored because he was in jail for sharing the good news about Jesus. This reason did not prevent him from serving God's church. Instead, he turned his demanding situation into a way to help others in challenging situations to trust in Jesus.

Put yourself in Paul's place and imagine you're unable to spend time with other believers like you usually would. Maybe you are not feeling well, or maybe you have moved somewhere far away. How would you keep yourself encouraged? _____

Activity #1: A Tower/Wall of Hope. Your teacher is going to give you items to either build a tower or wall of hope and some sticky notes. First, build your tower or wall with the items. Then knock over the pieces as your teacher or classmates call out things that might make someone lose hope. Next, fill the sticky notes with words or actions that might help someone rebuild their hope. Then, attach the sticky notes to the pieces you've knocked down. Finally, build your tower/wall again using the pieces with the sticky notes.

USING GOD'S WORD!!!

Today's lesson is extremely important. It reminds us that we really do minister to ourselves when we minister to others. That means things do not have to be going well for us before we reach out to someone in a tough situation. Instead, our actions

and words can have a deeper impact if people realize we can be understanding and kind to them when we are also troubled.

Of course, doing that is a lot easier if we already have something prepared to share. That way we can offer those words, songs, or pictures to others. What helps you feel encouraged when you are down? What if we created something as a class filled with those things? Then we could offer them to others as needed.

Activity #2: A Hope Chest and Encouragement Cards. Help transform the container your teacher provides into a Hope Chest. Then decorate one or more index cards with words of encouragement, pictures, song lyrics, poems, etc., that might help someone restore their hope. Say a short prayer before placing your card(s) into the Hope Chest. Finally, think of someone who could use one of the cards you've created and share one with that person.

REMIX!!!

The hope we have in Jesus is special. It does not just show up in good times. It also appears in challenging times if we are willing to share it. That way, we can transform an unpleasant experience into a way to help ourselves and others. Toni's friend sent her a playlist filled with encouraging songs. Then Toni passed her restored hope on to her big sister. In like manner, Paul wrote a letter to remind the people of Colossae and Laodicea that trouble did not have the final say. He passed his hope on in a way that continues to give us hope today.

PRAISE GOD!!!

Our hope is built on you, sweet Jesus.



You are our strong tower.

Because you went to the cross for us,

We can handle painful matters

In ways that encourage us and others

To keep our hope, faith, and love alive.

This news is so amazing

That we cannot keep it to ourselves. ~ AMEN.

YOU ARE OUR LETTER

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-3, 17-18

Key Verse: Not that we are qualified of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our qualification is from God. 2 Corinthians 3:5

2 Corinthians 3:1-3, 17-18 (NRSV UE)

2 Corinthians 3:1-3

1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we?

2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by all,

3 and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tab-

lets of stone but on tablets that are human hearts.

17-18

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

18 And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

WORD POWER!!!

- **Commend** – To let someone else know that a person is worth listening to, following, and/or spending time with.
- **Letter** – Written form of communication that allows someone to share important news or information with others.
- **Glory** – Excellence and/or goodness.

GETTING READY!!!



Frankie's mee-maw (grandmother) was always sending him notes. One note reminded him that Jesus loves him. A second thanked him for making a good grade in school. A third note said she was proud of how he helped his younger



cousins say their blessing before meals.

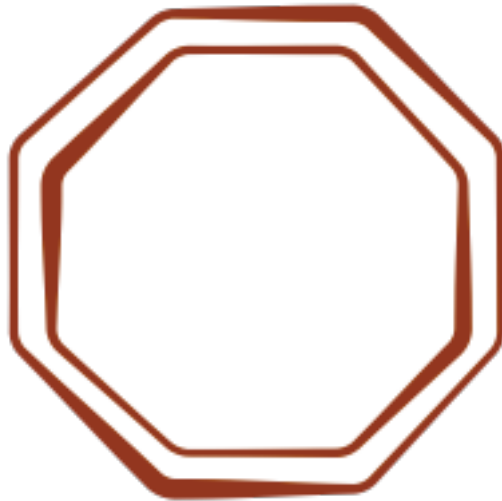
Frankie asked mee-maw why she left the notes. She answered that she wanted him to have written proof of how the Holy Spirit was working through him. That made Frankie feel hopeful that he could help people connect with God like mee-maw did for him.

Frankie wanted to try sending notes like his mee-maw but didn't think his handwriting was good enough. That's why he drew pictures or made collages for his friends instead. When his dad found out where Frankie got the idea, he gave Frankie a great compliment. Dad said that Frankie was a good reflection of his mee-maw.

INTO GOD'S WORD!!!

Some of the Corinthians didn't think they needed to listen to Paul and the other ministers. That's why Paul asked if he and the people working with him needed to make themselves look good to be believed. If so, he said he wouldn't do that. Instead, he would let the way the Holy Spirit was working to change the people through his ministry to them show them his value.

Activity #1: Mirror, Mirror. What kinds of things do you think the Holy Spirit freed the Corinthians from so they could see God's reflection in each other? Fill the mirrors below with your answers:



USING GOD'S WORD!!!

Sometimes, we don't realize that God is working through us. Our view may be blocked because we think God only uses adults. Or, we may think that our smiles and hugs don't make a difference.

Those thoughts and attitudes are like veils over a mirror. They keep us from seeing how God's using us. They also keep us from understanding how the Holy Spirit is helping us become more like Jesus.

Those "veils" get removed when other people let us know how they see God working in us. Likewise, we can see ourselves like Paul sees the Corinthians. As a result, we can discover that we're God's letters to the world.

Activity #2: From Veiled Mirrors to Open Letters. Pair off with another student in the class. One of you must try to look at yourself in a mirror that's covered by dark cloth while the other writes a note describing God approved behavior that they've noticed in you. As your partner reads their letter to you, remove the veil from the mirror. Next, tell them if you noticed that about yourself, too. Then exchange places with your partner and repeat.

REMIX!!!

Frankie became more comfortable sharing God's love with others after he showed what his mee-maw noticed him doing. He also found a way to do something similar for someone else. What are some things that God does for you that you'd like to do for someone else?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

PRAISE GOD!!!

The Jesus in me can see the Jesus in you.

The Jesus in me can see the Jesus in you.

I can see you. Yes, I see you: Spreading God's love.



(Sing to the tune of "The Jesus in Me Loves the Jesus in You")

POWER TO SERVE CHRIST

LESSON SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 15:1-13

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 15:1-7, 13

Key Verse: Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor. Romans 15:2

Romans 15:1-7, 13 (NRSV UE)

Romans 15:1-7

1 We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

2 Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor.

3 For Christ did not please himself, but, as it is written, "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."

4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

5 May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus,

6 so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

13

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

WORD POWER!!!

- **Neighbor** – Anyone we come in contact with who is different or “other.”
- **Steadfastness** – Being able to stick to something no matter what.
- **Harmony** – Being able to sing or play different notes that work together.
- **Unison** – Playing or singing the same note.
- **Juneteenth** – A federal holiday in the U.S. that celebrates June 19, 1865, when the last community of enslaved people in Galveston, TX learned that slavery had ended.

GETTING READY!!!

God’s Grace, the youth choir at St. Andrew GAME Church, had been invited to sing at the Juneteenth celebration. After learning about the meaning of Juneteenth, the choir was excited to participate. They even selected a song about freedom and hope that they thought would fit the occasion.



Now, they just had to decide how to sing the song. They could either sing it in unison or in harmony. They practiced the song both ways to see which would sound better. Neither version sounded great because no one was a strong harmony and unison singer. As a result, the director suggested something the choir had

not considered. He asked the strong harmony singers to help the weak harmony singers. He also asked the strong unison singers to help the weak unison singers. By the end of the third practice, the choir was able to sing both versions well. Because of these efforts, God's Grace proudly sang the song in harmony and in unison at the Juneteenth celebration.

Do you think God's Grace made the right choice? Yes ☐ No ☐ Why?

INTO GOD'S WORD!!!

The church at Rome had some members who were "strong" and some members who were "weak." Some Bible experts believe the "strong" members were the Gentiles who understood that Jesus would not reject those that did not follow Jewish rituals and diet rules. These same Bible experts believe the "weak" members were the Jews who did believe Jesus would reject such people.

It's also possible that "strong" members were the people who made sure all members could fully participate in the Roman church. These would be the Jewish Christians who stood up for the Gentile Christians who didn't follow Jewish customs. It would also be the Gentile Christians who stood up for Jewish Christians who did. Such people would be able to live in harmony with everyone in the community. They would also be able to help other members become sensitive to each other.

Activity #1: Tug of Peace. Break into two teams with weak and strong players. Once your teams are formed, take position on the two sides of the “Tug of War” rope. To play “Tug of Peace,” each team will need to do what it takes to make sure that no one on either team falls to the floor. When each team is done playing, talk about what it took to make sure that happened. Then decorate the Tug of Peace rope below with ways that you can use your strengths to help someone who is not strong in that area.



USING GOD’S WORD!!!



The Marvel Universe characters often find themselves choosing to either use their power for themselves alone or for the greater good. This is especially true in the Black Panther series. Every time someone who wears the Black Panther suit faces that choice, how he or she chooses affects more than themselves. Those who put on the suit and use the power of Wakanda for selfish reasons make decisions that hold others back. Those who put on the suit and use the power of Wakanda to help others make decisions that benefit the entire world.

Killmonger puts on the suit and does his best to make sure

no one else can ever become a Black Panther after him. He does not stop there, though. He also makes plans to share the military firepower of Wakanda with revolutionaries around the world.

T'Challa puts on the suit and takes his kingdom back from Killmonger. He does not stop there, though. He also shares the resources and knowledge of Wakanda with folks around the world who do not have access to such things. One of the people who receives that training and knowledge will later help his sister save the world from folks who mean it harm.

Activity #2: Bring Somebody With Me. Look at the information about Juneteenth that your teacher shares with you. First, put yourself in place of the black soldiers who were part of the group who brought the news about the end of slavery to the enslaved people of Galveston, TX. What would you say and how would you say it? Second, put yourself in the place of the enslaved people who received the news. How would you celebrate the following year?

REMIX!!!

The members of God's Grace had different strengths. They could have made fun of those who were weak in areas where they were strong. They also could have used their strengths to hurt others like Killmonger did. Instead, they chose to be like Jesus and T'Challa. They chose to use their strengths to help others become strong, also. What's something our class can do that shows our strengths and helps others become strong?

PRAISE GOD!!!

We're stronger together

Building up those who are weaker

Until all stand strong in faith

Sharing the good news

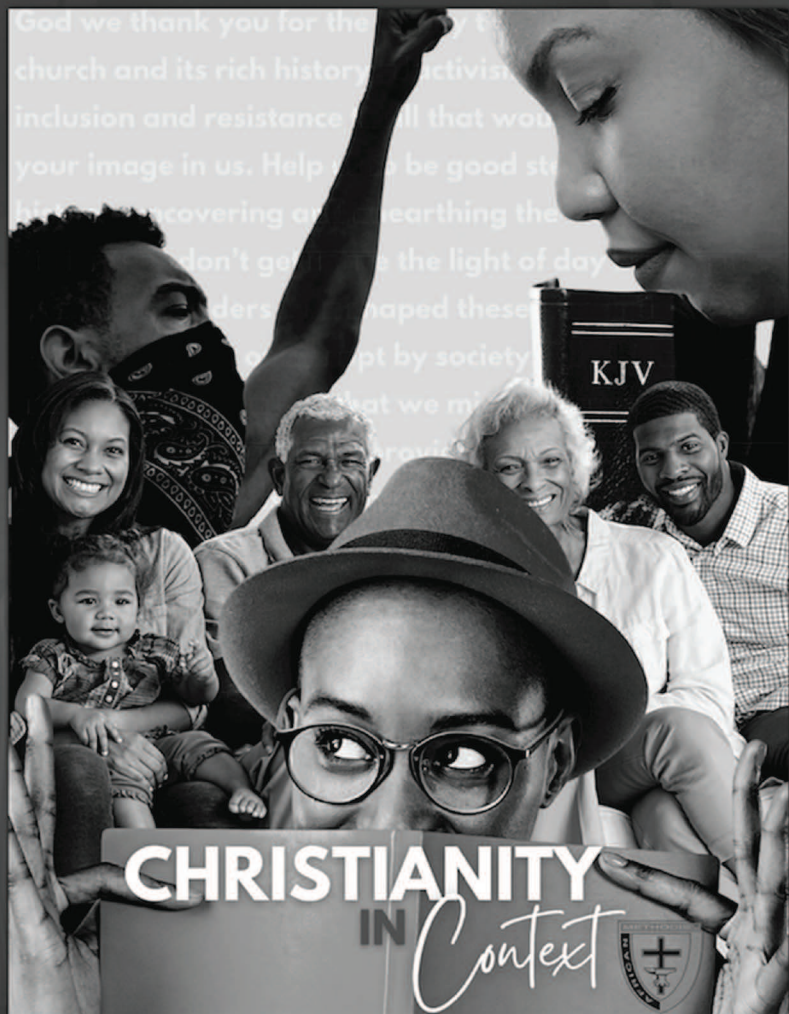
That Jesus still saves

We have hope for today

And tomorrow too

This, O God, we promise you. ~ AMEN.

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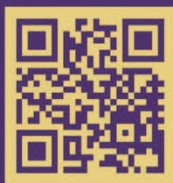
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