

Bible Engagement

Year B, Pentecost 2

By Beth Barnett

This is a Bible Engagement for the readings from Psalm 139, 2 Corinthians 4:7 and 1 Samuel 3:1-10.

Use this engagement during Early Word, or Bible Reading times.

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| You will need: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (empty) Envelope labelled 'Secret Message' • Terracotta coloured modelling clay/plasticene • Large clay jar or pot *check the op-shops/use a terracotta plant pot. • Envelope containing 3 messages - stashed in clay jar |
| Time required: | 5-7 minutes |

Introduction

I wonder where you think the best hiding places in this building are?

If you had to hide this envelope containing a secret message somewhere in this building where would you hide it?

Welcome and affirm all suggestions from the gathering - giving the option for those suggesting ideas to take the envelope and hide it there showing the group the place, or just naming it/pointing (depending on how keen the contributor is to move about.) After enjoying the suggestions of others, continue...

I do, in fact have a special message that I have hidden somewhere in this building. Now I wonder if you will be able to guess where it is?

Welcome and affirm all suggestions from the gathering - invite either the person who made the suggestion or another volunteer to go and check if the message is in that place.

If it is taking a long time to guess the location of the message, give some clues.

*When someone guesses that the message is in the clay jar, invite them to bring the jar to the centre of the group. Invite them to open the message if they can.
When the message is opened invite some volunteers to read the messages.*

These three messages are from three very different parts of the Bible - The Story of Samuel from the history stories of the Israelites in the Iron age, Poetry from the Psalms, and a letter to Greek followers of Jesus in the first century. Each of them though speaks about the message of God being hidden - hidden from the grown ups, but given to a child; hidden in the very deepest spirit of a person, even before they know it's there, hidden in ordinary everyday lives, chipped and broken like pots.

Thinking about these parts of the Bible, and where they show the treasured, valuable message of God hidden, I wonder now, where we think the message of God is hidden in our church...take a moment to look around. Where is the message of God hidden, ready and waiting to be discovered in our church?

*Leave space for suggestions - these might include
in the Bibles; in the sacraments; in the art/windows/banners decorations; in people's lives.*

God's message of hope and good news is hidden in lots of places here today - the most precious places - in our children; in the deepest parts of our spirits and in our everyday lives.

We all carry the message of God, a precious thing in an ordinary clay pot. To remind us of this, as we continue our worship and listening today, you are invited to take a lump of modelling clay and make a simple pot or jar. This jar is you. You might make it little or tall, or lumpy or curvy or rough or wide open or with a lid. That's for you to work out. But within your life, God hides his message of hope, ready and precious to be discovered and shared.

Towards the end of your gathering, you might invite those who have made clay pots to bring them to a particular display space for everyone to see and appreciate the diversity and beauty and fragility of who we all are together.



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Resources

The verses to print and hide in the pot:

“When the people of God lived in tribes, with no king, and depended on prophets and priests to know what God was saying to them, God hid his message from the grown up priest Eli, but revealed it to the boy, Samuel.”

“In the time of King David, the Psalm singer writes ‘Nothing about me is hidden from you, God.’”

“Paul and Timothy write to the early Corinthian Christians, ‘We have this treasure hidden in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.’”



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