

CONCEPTS that will be covered in the lesson

- Read the story of Jesus calming the storm
- Introduce concept of chaos
- Make connection between power of words and how things are ordered – or that creation listens

Materials needed:

1. **NOTE:** This lesson makes a number of references to the stories and lessons from the previous session (Session 1: God and Communication)
2. Movie clip (available on rfour.org) from *Babe*
3. Electronics that show the video clip
4. Three dice per # team.
 - a. You'll want 4 or less people per team and each team should have an equal number of people on it.
 - b. Pieces of paper to track score with
 - c. Pencils for writing
 - d. *Optional:* Cups to shake the dice in and boxes to roll the dice into

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

- One of the things we do every class is ask and answer the opening question at the beginning of class – because it helps us 1. Learn more about each other and 2. Helps “warm us up” for some of the ideas in the upcoming lesson. So we’re going to do that now.
- So here’s the opening question for today’s class. I [the teacher] will ask the question and then to give you some time to think of an answer, I will answer first.
- Once I answer the question, we’ll go around the circle and each of us will answer.
- When it’s your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- **Here’s this week’s question:** What’s a random thing that has happened to you recently that sticks in your mind?

TRANSITION TO ACTIVITY

- Our last session was about the power of language and how it can bring us together and separate us.
- In today’s story, we’ll look a little bit more at language, but we’ll also be transitioning to our next session.
- What the stories in this next session have in common is the theme of chaos.

- And, in today’s story, we’ll hopefully see how chaos and language are at least a little bit intertwined.
- But before we read the story, let’s discuss chaos a little bit
- Chaos is when things are completely disordered and confused.
- And -- there’s a lot of chaos in life – and we have a lot of words to describe it. For example:
 - Luck
 - Chance
 - Randomness
 - Disruption
 - Upheaval
 - Mayhem
 - Pandemonium
 - Maelstrom
 - Anarchy
- In general, I don’t think chaos is good or bad
- Sometimes, chaos can be fun and create opportunities that otherwise wouldn’t be available
- But too much chaos for too long of a time has a pretty negative effect upon us – it’s hard on us
- Chaos causes stress and lack of focus in us that then leads to bad decision-making.
- Over time, all of that wears us down.
- To help us think a little bit more about what chaos is and even a little bit about how it feels – let’s do the following activity of BUNCO

EXPLAIN ACTIVITY

- We’ll split into 2 or more teams of two or more people each –we want to make sure we have an equal number of people on each team
- Each team will receive a set of three dice
- Usually, there are six rounds. Round 1, Round 2, etc, but for this first attempt, we’ll play 3 rounds.
- When the round begins, a member on each team starts rolling all three dice
- After the roll, if one or more of the die match the number of the round, then that counts as one point for that person.
- For example, in round one, if a person rolls a 1, 5 and a 1, then they will receive one point for that roll (because of the two “1s” on the dice that equals Round 1)
- Then, because that person scored a point, that same person picks up all the dice and rolls all three dice again.
- If the person doesn't roll ANY 1s, then it's the next person's turn. That's how the dice get passed. Whenever you roll the dice, but *none* of the rolled dice show the number of the round, then you have to pass the dice.
- If you roll all three dice and all three dice show the number of the round, that's a Bunco! Yell “bunco!” and mark down 8 points for yourself. Then keep rolling!
- If you roll all three dice and get three of a kind (like three “5s”) that does not match the round number, yell “Baby Bunco!” You get 4 points, but have to pass the dice.
- Once a TEAM gets a total of 12 points (by adding up the points of each individual on the team), then the round is done and the next round number becomes the number that you are trying to roll.
- Once ONE team gets 12 points, all teams must stop rolling immediately because the round is done.
- The idea is to move quickly with the dice rolling, score keeping, and dice passing. Moving quicker helps you get

points at a faster rate.

- Basically, it's a dice race.
- Due to time, we'll play 3 rounds to start. Then if we have time at the end of class, we'll play more rounds.
- Any questions?

DO BUNCO Activity

ASK

- Once you were comfortable with the rules, did you feel pressure about time because of the other teams?
- When you heard other teams yell "Bunco" and "Baby Bunco" did you feel like you were being left behind?
- Did the dice seem to roll better for some people and not for others?
- Did the game ever feel unfair?
- Did you find yourself telling people (or at least wanting to tell them) to hurry up?

TELL / TRANSITION TO SCRIPTURE

- It sounds like you experienced some chaos in today's game with lots of people talking at the same time, simultaneous actions between teams, score keeping, dice passing, Bunco yelling, etc.
- Personally, I thought it was kinda fun. But I wouldn't want that to be my life 24/7
- Hopefully you enjoyed the activity AND hopefully it helped you better understand a little bit better what we mean when we're talking about chaos and a chaotic situation.
- In the today's Bible story, then, we will see a chaotic situation take place for the disciples that scares them and overwhelms them.
- But Jesus has a different response than the disciples.
- Let's see what happens

READ Mark 4:35-41 *(recommendation: Have class read it aloud; one person per verse)*

35On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." 36And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. 37A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not

care that we are perishing?" 39He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. 40He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

ASK

- In verse 36, where were Jesus and the disciples? (on a boat)
- In verse 37, what happens while they are in the boat? (a storm arises)
- In verse 38, at first did Jesus notice that there was a storm? (no)
 - a) Why? (because he was sleeping)
- Verse 38, when the disciples wake Jesus up, what do they ask him? ("Don't you care that we are perishing?")

- What do you think – are the disciples feeling the stress of a chaotic situation? (yes)
- What things do you think are feeling chaotic to them? (the loudness of the wind and waves; the rocking of the boat; they are probably very wet and possibly cold; they probably can't see well since it's nighttime and it's cloudy; and they are probably afraid of dying)
- Verse 39 - Once Jesus is awake, what does he do? (he speaks against the chaotic situation)
- Verse 40 – After the storm is stilled, do you think Jesus' response to his disciples is unfair?)

TELL

- A pretty chaotic situation, there, I think, for the disciples.
- They were in a bad place, they were helpless, and it didn't look like things were going to work out for them.
- Things were falling apart for them in a big way
- So why wasn't Jesus feeling the same stress? Why wasn't the chaotic moment overwhelming Jesus?
- Somewhat frustratingly, this particular story doesn't directly answer that question.
- But, what we do see in today's story is that Jesus uses words in the same ways that God did in the creation story
- Jesus speaks to creation and creation responds
- In the creation story, God said, "Let there be light" and there was light
- In today's story, Jesus said, "Be still" and the storm was still
- In plenty of other stories, we see that Jesus spends a lot of time in prayer
- Which means, we can make an educated guess that in his prayer time, Jesus was learning and receiving understanding about how to use language – in a similar way that we saw in the Pentecost story where the disciples prayed and prayed and prayed and then when they spoke, everyone could understand them.
- Today's story seems to copy that story of Pentecost: Because Jesus is in contact with God on a regular basis, then he is able to use language in a way that mimics how God used language in the creation story.
- And, because Jesus has learned to use this powerful tool of language with God's help, he seems to be far less afraid than his disciples are. He can even sleep through a storm.
- One of the things to pay attention to, then, in this story is to think about how language can help us in all sorts of chaotic, stressful situations.

TRANSITION TO MOVIE CLIP

- To help us think about how language helps to solve OTHER chaotic and stressful situations, let's watch the following clip from the movie, *Babe*
- In it, the pig, Babe, who has been adopted by the farmer and the dog family, is being encouraged to act like a dog and treat the sheep just like a sheep dog would.
- Things don't go according to plan...let's see what happens

WATCH MOVIE CLIP

ASK

- Did the sheep respond to Babe barking at them? (No)
- Did the sheep respond to Babe biting them? (No)
- Was the farmer and the dad dog disappointed with Babe when the sheep weren't responding to Babe? (yes)

- Have you ever been in a similar situation where you're trying to do something someone else's way and you can't do it that way and the people watching get disappointed? It's stressful, isn't it?
- What do the sheep suggest to Babe that Babe should do? (Just ask)
- Does asking work? (Yes)
- Does the mom dog believe it? (not really, no)

TELL

- At first, Babe doesn't know the right language to speak
- He tries to bark like a dog
- And then he tries to bite like a dog
- None of which works.
- On top of his failure, the sheep are laughing, the farmer is walking away, and the dad dog is disappointed.
- It's a chaotic situation!
 - *Aside:* Not as life-threatening as the disciples faced in today's story, but still – it's a stressful, chaotic situation.
- But then, what changes the chaotic situation? (the sheep suggest that Babe uses his polite words)
- Once Babe listens to the sheep and talks like the sheep suggest, then he's finally speaking the right language.
- And, once Babe is speaking the right language, the sheep become very nicely ordered, do what he says, and the disappointment from the farmer and the dogs is removed.
- Just like that, by speaking the right words, Babe's storm was quelled.
- We see the same thing happen in today's scripture story.
- The story of Jesus calming the storm can serve as a reminder that as we learn from Jesus how to pay attention to God, we can then learn ways to speak that order and calm the chaos.
- And that's the good news for today.

CLOSING PRAYER