

**2018 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Grades 4-6**

Theme:

“They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” (Acts 2:42)

Goal:

To help the students understand the theme well enough to express it in art, photography, poetry, and creative writing.

Lesson Objectives:

The students will be able to:

- Identify the importance of ancient traditions and teachings.
- Describe how the people in the early church worked together.
- Compare how our traditions and worship today reflect the ancient church.
- Identify ways we can preserve our faith for future generations.

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Bring in a family heirloom and/or ask students in advance to bring something in that they may have from a grandparent, etc. (An object, icon, recipe, or verbally share a family tradition)
 - Bibles
 - Butcher paper or poster board- 1 per group of 2 or 3
 - Markers
 - One large poster board divided into four squares with a marker (One line down the middle vertically and one horizontally)
 - Icon of The Mystical Supper (*attached*)

Opening Prayer:

O heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art in all places and fillest all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life, come and dwell in us and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Introduction:

Share family heirlooms with one another and discuss how families save or pass down special items, icons, recipes, and traditions. Ask students why families pass down these things. (To preserve them, to have a connection with previous relatives, connection with the past, etc.)

"We keep these items intact because they are special to us. We take good care of them and save them to be passed on to the next generation. In our lesson today, we will learn how the teachings of the church have been passed down to us in much the same way."

Discussion:

"What would happen if we had a blanket (or any item that you brought) from our grandparents and cut it in half? Would it be the same? What do you think would happen if we changed a recipe? When we change things, they are no longer accurate or the same."

"The Orthodox church is true from the beginning. We don't change what we believe. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Our church is part of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. So our faith has continued on today from the very beginning when people first became followers of Jesus! Our church continues the teachings that were started by the Apostles."

"Since the church is our family and our foundation, we need to preserve the ancient church and its faith that was established for us."

Small Group Activity: Divide the class into groups of 2 or 3. Provide each group with a Bible, a piece of butcher paper or poster board, and markers. Prepare the poster in advance with the title, "The Early Church" at the top, and write the scripture verse below the title.

Have each group choose a reader to read Acts 2:42-47 aloud. Then have each group work together to write down different ways that members of the early church worked together as a team. (They should use words and pictures on their posters. Some students may prefer writing, while others may prefer drawing. They should have ideas written down such as sharing, praying, meeting together, eating a meal together, etc.)

Discussion: Have each group share their posters and compare them with each other. (The posters can be hung up in the room as a reminder of the topic.)

Discuss the 4 main ideas that the Disciples taught. (Prayer, breaking bread, worship, fellowship.) *"If the Disciples taught us these things and passed them down to us for our benefit, how can we preserve them? What can we do to make sure we continue the traditions from our early church fathers? Let's complete the chart by putting your ideas into the correct category."*

Large Group Activity: Using the large chart that has been divided into 4 sections and labeled "Prayer," "Breaking Bread," "Worship," and "Fellowship," have students take turns coming up and filling in their ideas about each one.

Sample answers:

Prayer: Pray every day, pray for each other, reverence icons, read our Bibles, light candles

Breaking Bread: Receive communion, have meals with each other, serve at a homeless shelter, eat a meal with grandparent.

Worship: Attend services such as Divine Liturgy or Vespers; receive the sacraments.

Fellowship: Invite others to attend church, attend Bible studies, attend social events at church, be involved in youth and/or teen activities, spend time with our families.

Conclusion:

Discuss the Icon of The Mystical Supper. Ask the students how they think the Apostles felt as they shared the meal together.

“Just as our ancestors showed love by leaving us their traditions and their examples of faith, God used the early church to teach us to spread love in order for the church to grow. The Early Christians were full of love and joy when they were praying, worshipping, breaking bread, and having fellowship with one another. How can we be like the early Christians?” (Be joyful when we are in church, be accepting and loving towards each other, seek fellowship with others of the same faith.)

“How can we preserve the Orthodox Faith so that it will continue to be passed down to future generations?” (Be witnesses to others by sharing our faith, be positive role models for the younger children in our families and in our church, help to take care of the church, help care for the special items in our church to preserve them for future generations.)

Closing Prayer:

We thank thee, O Christ our God, that thou has satisfied us with thy earthly gifts, deprive us not of thy Heavenly Kingdom, but as thou entered into the midst of thy disciples, O Savior, and gave them peace, enter also among us and save us. Amen.

