ALL IN GOD'S IMAGE

A CELEBRATION of BLACK HISTORY and DIVERSITY

WEEK 1

A Family Guide for the Ohio Episcopal Area of The UMC

EAST OHIO CONFERENCE
MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

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Note to Teachers, Parents, and Caregivers,

This unit was designed to provide an introductory look at African American History for family groups in the home setting as well as Sunday School settings. It is arranged in four lessons, one per week, to take place during Black History Month or at other times during the year. A free and full curriculum for various grades levels is available by contacting the Office of Multicultural Ministries or downloading it on the East Ohio Conference website.

The format of each lesson includes:

- Objectives.
- Supplies. Supplies might include specific book titles and/or equipment, i.e., a computer, to project online stories, pictures, or maps.
- Introduction and Bible Memory Verse. Please encourage the child(ren) to learn the Bible verse and see how it relates to the information shared on that particular day.
- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. The stories have been chosen carefully for each grade level. The books can easily be obtained through your local libraries, book distributors, or read-aloud versions which are available online. Scripted discussion questions should also prove helpful and are listed in each lesson. Skits (role play) may be included in some lessons. In addition, suggested photographs of key individuals, maps, and other materials will be mentioned.
- Music. Music has been essential in the African American culture for centuries and was shared with all Americans. Simple songs are included in the lesson plans, many of which are found in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Most of the songs should be familiar and are easy to teach.
- Conclusion and Prayer. Closing statements and prayers are included. Please also spotlight the prayers of several African Americans which are also listed at the end of each lesson.
- Activities. Art projects are opportunities to end the lesson in creative ways.
- Extended Activities. Children can be encouraged to share new information with family members and friends. Some home activities are suggested, and extensive listings of recommended books for children are also included at the end of the unit.
- References and Appendix. A complete list of books and some extended activities are spotlighted at the end of the unit.

Final Comments:

Attempting to introduce African American History in a short timeframe is challenging but important in all settings in the Ohio Episcopal Area. I have included significant events and individuals, but there are so many more! I hope that this will be just the first step in continuing to explore Black History in future years. We all have so much yet to learn.

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Teacher/Parent Code to Lesson Plans

- Lesson Numbers are at top of first page of each lesson **in bold**.
- Themes explored in the lesson are at top of first page of each lesson **in bold**.
- Lesson Objectives are on first page of each lesson.
- Sentences highlighted in gray are scripted words of important information to be shared by the adult or an older sibling or student.
- *Sentences in italics* are suggested questions (and answers) which can be posed by the adult or read by an older student.

Week 1 Lesson Plan

Theme: The Rich African Culture, Despair and Courage in Slavery

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will …

- Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.
- Define the concept of slavery.
- Name individuals who demonstrated courage when attempting to escape to freedom through the Underground Railroad.
- State ways in which Africans were leaders, musicians, storytellers, artisans, farmers, and other tradespeople prior to enslavement in the 17th Century and how these gifts were brought to America.
- Define the term spiritual and be able to learn and sing an example.
- Begin a mural which will include pictures and words representing the period of Black History discussed in the lesson.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *Anansi the Spider, A Tale from the Ashanti* by Gerald McDermott. *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map
- Homemade clay or Play Dough

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including memory Bible verses). Apply these verses to our world's diversity, all people made in God's image. Ask children to memorize this verse in the week to come. Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good.

Ask the children what we typically think about during the month of February (Ground Hog's Day, Valentine's Day, birthdays of Pres. Washington and Lincoln). Show them a picture of Carter Woodson (obtained online or in reference books). This is a picture of Carter Woodson, who is known as the father of Black History Month which takes place every February. Mr. Woodson was an African American whose parents were born slaves. He graduated from the University of Chicago and was the second African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard University. A writer and historian, Carter Woodson started Black [Negro] History Week in 1926. Beginning today, we are going to spend four Sundays talking about some of the many events and people we celebrate in Black History. There are so many, though, that we cannot get through them all in one month! We should celebrate African American History as part of American history all year through!

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Show children map of world with special emphasis on West Africa. (Read or listen to the book, *Anansi the Spider, A Tale from the Ashanti* by Gerald McDermott.) *How did Ashanti's sons help him? How do you help your parents or caregivers when they need you? How did the God of All Things, Nyame, decide to reward the sons? (He gave them the moon.)* *Anansi the Spider* is a folktale that has been passed on for many generations, first by word-of-mouth. African Americans have been great storytellers since long before they came to America. But Africans did not choose to leave their beautiful continent to come here; they were captured, chained, and brought here in big ships to serve as slaves to the American people. *What is a slave? (A person who is taken against his or her will by force to do work for others). Does God want people to force other people to be slaves? Why not?* While slavery took place for hundreds and hundreds of years in America, the African American people still shared their many gifts with others. They told stories, were musicians, made beautiful art, built large buildings, made cloth and colorful clothes, harvested plants, and made medicine and food. And, they were forced to do very, very hard work outside, which other people didn't want to do, from morning until night. Even children were slaves. On Sundays, they worshiped God. They prayed and sang songs we now call spirituals. Some of those spirituals were songs of encouragement to each other, and some were even secret messages for people attempting to escape on the Underground Railroad. We will learn a spiritual in a few minutes! During the years of slavery, there were many courageous people who tried to help others escape to freedom. This was called the Underground Railroad, but it wasn't a real railroad with trains. It was a network of people, of all colors, who helped hundreds of individuals escape to the North. One of the most famous "conductors" was Harriet Tubman who led more than 300 people to freedom. She was a hero! (Show photo of Harriet Tubman obtained online or in reference books.) Another person was Henry Brown who actually mailed himself to freedom, described in Ellen Levine's book, *Henry's Freedom Box*. Read or listen to the book, *Henry's Freedom Box*, by Ellen Levine.

How would you feel if you watched your family being separated and you might never see them again? What do you think of Henry's idea to travel to freedom in a box? Who helped him along the way? Why didn't Black slaves know their birthdays? (Information might be kept from them by masters if it was known at all; no calendars; time was measured according to seasons, not days, etc.) Was it fair that they couldn't know their birthdays? Why did Henry consider March 30, 1849 to be his birthday at the end of the book?

- Music to hear and/or sing. "This Little Light of Mine" spiritual (using body instruments and audio) We mentioned spirituals a minute ago. One of the spirituals that has lasted for hundreds of years is called "This Little Light of Mine." Today we are going to learn the song together. African slaves were not allowed to use musical instruments, but many loved to use parts of their own bodies as instruments. How could we make sounds using only our bodies? (clapping, stomping our feet, hitting the ground with our hands or an object like a wooden spoon, etc.) Let's try those sounds, and then we will learn the song together. "This Little Light of Mine" is #585 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Great singing and instruments, everyone! *How were the enslaved people lights to others around them? (brave, talented, hardworking, prayerful, determined, God-loving, etc.) What types of light do we show to each other every day?*

- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader. Summarize the important points of the lesson. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We pray that we will continue to learn more about Black History this month and in the months to come. Let's now also say a well-known prayer of Harriet Tubman together. (Repeat several times.) Harriet Tubman's Prayer: "I'm going to hold steady on You, an' You've got to see me through."

- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Begin a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—African artisans and their creations, "Anansi" the spider, slave ships and slavery, Henry's box to freedom, Carter Woodson, etc.) Using homemade clay or Play Dough, create little figures, animals or birds. This form of art came with the Dahomey artisans to America when they were enslaved. (An artisan is a skilled artist.) The Dahomey kingdom was well-established in West Africa by the 1600s. For more information, see "John Dreams" from the book *Freedom Over Me* by Ashley Bryan. (See the list of references at end of unit).

- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week (included in packet): Make a colored hands wreath to celebrate the many different people who live in the world.

Bible Memory Verses (Common English Bible)

Lesson One:

Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good.

Lesson Two:

2 Corinthians 3: 17 CEB The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom.

Lesson Three:

James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy.

Lesson Four:

Matthew 7:12 CEB Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the Law and the Prophets.

Resources for Children suggested by the Ohio Episcopal Area

Go to: https://www.eocumc.com/standagainstracism/childrensresources.html for a full list.

As United Methodists examine ways to end racial injustice, offering resources about racism to children can help a younger generation be part of the solution.

Resources for Children suggested by The United Methodist Church

Go to: https://www.umc.org/en/content/books-about-racism-for-kids for full list.

The conversation about race should not limited to adults. Bringing children into calm, educated discussions can help a younger generation confront the reality of racism and be part of the solution in ending racial injustice.

How to Make a Colored Hands Wreath for Martin Luther King Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is always the third Monday in January and it marks Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday. This craft is in honor of that day. The colored hands represent children of different races joining hands in peace and unity.

Materials Needed

- colored papers, assorted
- scissors
- glue

Step 1

With the back portion of the colored papers, let a child trace his/her hand with a marker. Do the same to the other paper colors until you have around 7-8 pieces.

Step 2

With a pair of scissors, cut the drawings and set aside.

Step 3

When all hand shapes are cut, arrange them in a circle as if the hands are reaching outwards. Make sure the colors are alternately placed. Glue the outer side so it touches the side of the other hand. Continue doing this until you create a circle that resembles a wreath. There you have it … you just finished making your colored hands wreath for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Doesn't it look awesome when finished? Now go hang it proudly for all to see!

This activity can be found at: artistshelpingchildren.org/kidscraftsactivitiesblog/2012/01/how-to-make-a-colored-hands-wreath-for-martin-luther king-day/

References

Note: The following books were used in the preparation of this teaching unit. They are a valuable asset for children of all ages.

Suggested Biographies and Historical Fiction for Younger Readers

*Bryan, Ashley. (2016). *Freedom Over Me*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
Clark-Robinson, Monica & Morrison, Frank. (2018). *Let the Children March*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
*Coles, Robert & Ford, George. (1995). *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. New York: Scholastic Inc.
*Colins, Luke. (2014). *Mae Jemison*. North Mankato, Minnesota: Capstone Press.
Crews, Donald. (1991). *BIGMAMA'S*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
Easton, Emily & Chen, Ziyue. (2018). *Enough! 20 Protestors Who Changed America*. New York: Crown Books for Young Readers.
Johnson, Angela & Long, Loren. (2007). *Wind of Flyers*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
*Levine, Ellen & Nelson, Kadir. (2007). *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad*. New York: Scholastic Press.
Lyons, Kelly Starling & Mallett, Keith. (2019). *Sing a Song: How "Lift Every Voice and Sing" Inspired Generations*. New York: Nancy Paulson Books.
*McDermott, Gerald. (1972). *Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
*Obama, Barack & Long, Loren. (2010). *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
*Parks, Rosa (with Jim Haskins) & Clay, Wil. (2011) *I Am Rosa Parks*. New York: Penguin Young Readers.
Pinkney, Andrea Davis, Fancher, Lou & Johnson, Steve. (2016). A *Poem for Peter: The Story of Ezra Jack Keats and the Creation of the Snowy Day*. New York: Viking.
*Rappaport, Doreen & Collier, Bryan. (2001). *Martin's Big Words*. New York: Jump at the Start/Hyperion Paperbacks for Children.
Woodson, Jacqueline & Lewis, E.B. *The Other Side*. (2001). New York: G.P Putnam's Sons.

(Books marked with asterisk (*) were utilized in lessons.)