

## StoryPath Selections

### 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

YEAR B: October 21, 2018

Gospel Reading: Mark 10:35-45

***The Spiffiest Giant in Town* by Julia Donaldson**

Jesus tells James and John that if they want to be the greatest of all, to sit by his side in God's reign, then they will have to serve. Jesus came to serve, so as his disciples, they must also serve. In *The Spiffiest Giant in Town* a giant named George gets all decked out in new fancy clothes, and he is quite pleased with himself. But as he walks through town, he keeps finding animals who need help for various problems, and his giant-sized items of clothing are the perfect solution. Each time, he willingly offers what he is wearing so that the little animals can solve their problems, without any hesitation. George serves the animals rather than thinking of himself. As Jesus' disciples we, too, are called not to be served, but to serve, and to do so with willingness, like George the giant.

### Year C October 28

First Reading: Exodus 34:29-35

***The Tin Forest* by Helen Ward**

(Written for ages 5-9)

**Comment:** In this text we read of the way Moses is changed by his face to face experience of God. Being in God's presence causes him to shine. While this process may seem strange to us, it opens up the possibility for thoughtful reflection. How do experiences of the Divine change us? While we are likely not blinded by the light of one another's faces, where do we find the light seeping through in our own lives? In talking with children, this text invites us to think about the way our relationship with God changes us, more fully into the people God created us to be. The image of creation being lit and more fully becoming what it was intended to be can be found in *The Tin Forest*. As the forest shifts from garbage sculptures to living organism, it fills with a warm glow and is forever changed.

**Year B: November 4th, 2018**

First Reading: **Ruth 1:1-18**

***Before Morning* by Joyce Sidman**

(Written for ages 4-7)

**Comment:** *In Before Morning*, a little girl dislikes the rush of her family's activities and doesn't want her mother to go off to work the next day. She wants her whole family together, so she wishes for a snow storm to blanket the city and make all the activity and busyness pause for just a little while, so they can all stay home together. Her wish comes true and her family stays home together, playing in the snow. In the scripture from Ruth, Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, urges Ruth to return to her original family, her original country, but Naomi has become Ruth's family and Ruth wants her family to stay together. So, she decides to journey on with Naomi and tells Naomi not to urge her to leave, because she is sticking together with her family. As people of faith, our journey is long, and we go through hard times. So, what a gift it is to have family—all kinds of family—to stick with on that journey and through the most difficult times.

**Year B November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Gospel Reading: **Mark 12:38-44**

***Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts**

**Comment:** Jesus chastises the religious leaders for only doing things to show off. He commends, instead, a woman who gives her last two coins, without attention or applause. Jesus knows that what is outside doesn't necessarily mean the most. In *Those Shoes*, everyone in Jeremy's class is showing off their new, impressive shoes and Jeremy, understandably, wants them. But his family can't afford them. He first has to wear a pair of shoes from a charity box, and then his grandmother gets him a pair of boots but they are not the impressive shoes. At a thrift shop, he finds a pair of the impressive shoes he wants. Those shoes are way too small, but in his desperation to look as cool as his classmates, he wears them anyway, despite how much they hurt. But he notices another student at school, Antonio, whose own shoes are in terrible shape. Antonio has noticed Jeremy's shoes and Jeremy knows that he would even wear the charity box shoes if it meant having shoes that are not falling apart. Eventually, Jeremy gives Antonio the too-small impressive shoes, and learns to appreciate the shoes and boots he has. Jeremy realizes what

Jesus is telling the religious leaders and disciples—that showing off and focusing on what is on the outside is not the most important thing, and that giving to others quietly and from the heart is the worthier goal. Like Jeremy, we may be taken in at first by public displays and showing off, like those of the religious leaders, but as people of faith, we train our eyes to notice what we have, and to offer it up with quietly generous hearts.

**Year B November 18, 2018**

**Second Reading: Hebrews 10:11-14, (15-18) 19-25**

***Everybody Brings Noodles* by Norah Dooley**

**Comment:** The end of our Hebrews passage encourages the readers not to neglect meeting together. The gathering of the community of faith is crucial, a chance to approach Jesus in faith and confidence, a chance to confess our hope in him, and a chance to provoke one another to good deeds. The community of faith needs to gather together to do those things. In *Everybody Brings Noodles*, Carrie plans a talent show so that everyone can display their talents, but the real draw is that everyone gets to come together in their community and show what they have in common—their various types of noodles. This type of community is just as important today as people of faith as it was when the letter of Hebrews was originally written. It is a chance to show what we have in common, like Carrie and her neighbors do, a chance to worship, a chance to provoke one another to good deeds.