

Thoughts and Smiles – Aug. 25, 2025



Sunday mornings in our house started with a lot of “Hurry up!” and “Where did you put your other sock?” But eventually, I’d be dressed in my Sunday best—itchy trousers, shiny shoes, and my hair slicked down with something that smelled suspiciously like Mum’s hand lotion. The walk to church was always a bit of an adventure. I’d kick pebbles along the sidewalk, and Dad would remind me to keep my shirt tucked in. Again. Then came the moment: the big wooden door, the smell of lemon polish and coffee percolating somewhere. We’d file into the Sunday School room—me, my friends, and that one girl who always knew every answer.

The chairs were metal and cold, and if you wriggled just right, they made a noise that sounded... well, let’s just say it caused some giggling.

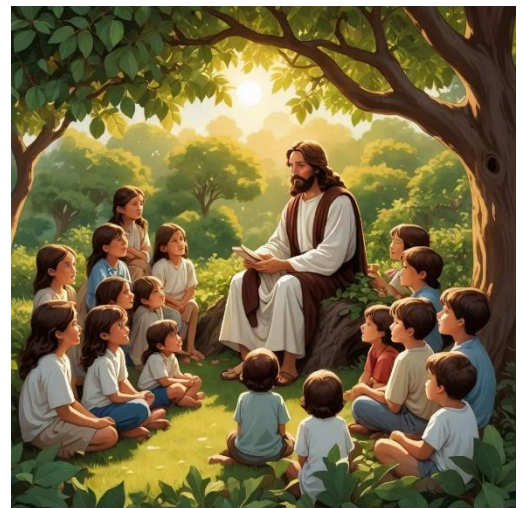
Our teacher was Mrs. Robinson, who had a purse like Mary Poppins—she could pull out anything from felt flannelgraphs to a box of arrowroot cookies.

I loved story time best. David and Goliath, Noah’s Ark, Jesus feeding the five thousand—it was like Saturday morning cartoons but holier. And we got to sing. Loudly.

“Jesus loves me, this I know...” We’d belt it out, and honestly, I think Jesus loved us louder for it.

Craft time was gluey and glorious—macaroni crosses, glitter that never left your sweater, and Bible verse bookmarks we’d proudly give to our mums (who’d use them in cookbooks).

Looking back, I didn’t always understand the lessons. But I knew this: I was welcome. I was loved. And somehow, I belonged.



Well now, teaching Sunday School in the 1960s... that was something. I still remember my first time. I had a brand-new lesson plan from the United Church curriculum in one hand, a flannelgraph board in the other, and a prayer in my heart that at least one child would sit still for five minutes.

Back then, we didn't have PowerPoint or YouTube clips. We had construction paper, scissors with the tips broken off, and jars of paste that mysteriously disappeared during craft time. Honestly, I think a few of the kids were eating it. And yet—somehow—we created masterpieces of Noah's ark, or Jesus feeding the five thousand, all in crayon and glue.

My classroom was in the church basement—painted a cheerful shade of mustard yellow, if memory serves. We had folding chairs that wobbled, tables too tall for the littlest ones, and an upright piano that hadn't been tuned since the war. But oh, how we sang! "Jesus Loves Me," "This Little Light of Mine," and "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"—loud, proud, and occasionally on key.

I'd spend Saturday evenings preparing the lesson with the old blue curriculum binder open on the kitchen table, right next to my cup of Sanka. There were suggested memory verses, discussion questions, and a craft that always required googly eyes—never once included.

We didn't just teach stories—we told them. And we watched young eyes light up with the wonder of Zacchaeus in a tree, or Jonah inside a fish. I once made a cardboard whale so big the kids could crawl inside. One child refused to come out, convinced they'd been "called by God to remain in the belly."

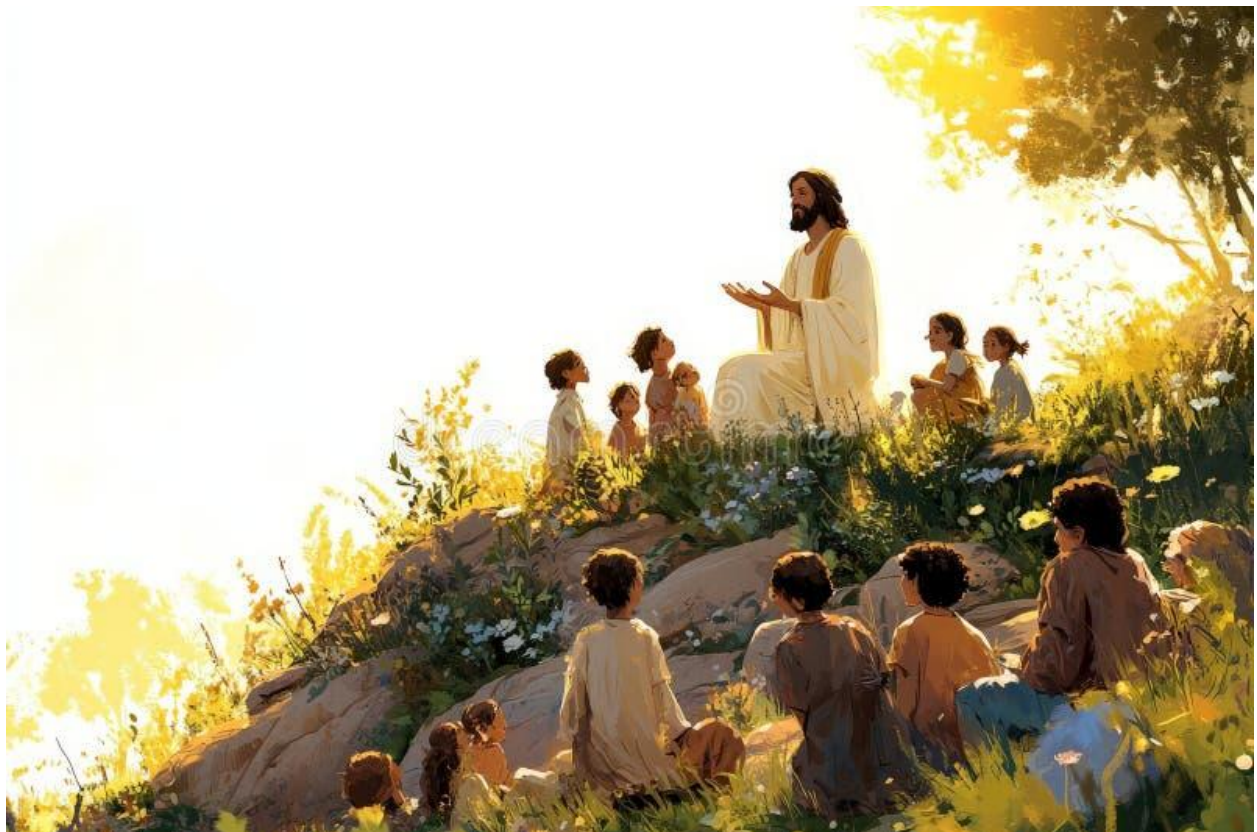
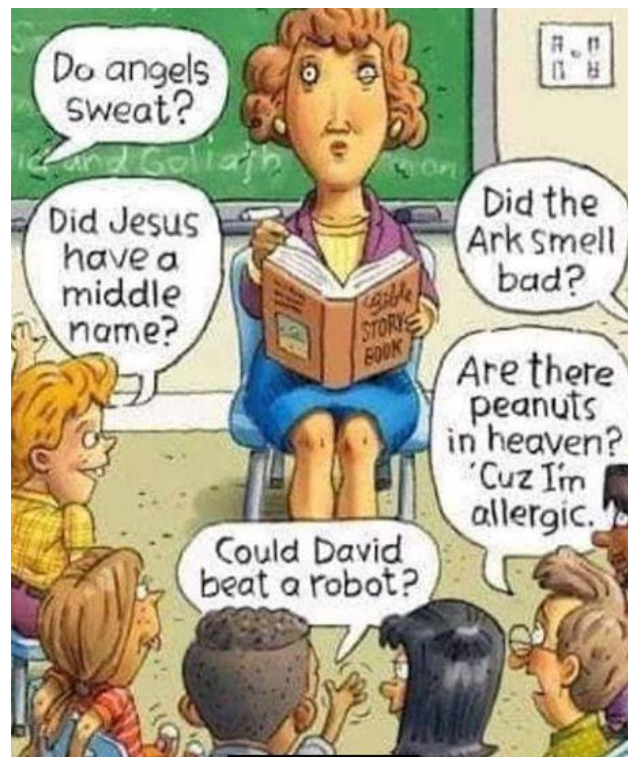
Of course, there were mishaps. Like the day we accidentally set the felt dove on fire during Pentecost Sunday (note to self: candles and flannelgraph are a risky mix). But we laughed, we learned, and we prayed together—sometimes all at once.

And the rewards? Oh, the rewards were never in gold stars or perfect attendance pins—though we had those too—but in seeing faith take root in small hearts. Some of those kids are now grandparents. Some even became ministers. And others? Well, they still remember the songs. And that's enough.

Teaching Sunday School wasn't about being perfect. It was about showing up—with love, a little patience, and a willingness to grow right alongside the children.



And really, isn't that what the church has always been about?





Accidentally gave my kid trauma for breakfast this morning.



Blessings to you all!
David Jones
Minister
Hepworth-Sauble Beach Pastoral Charge

Check out "David's Blog" on the Sauble Beach United Church website.
<https://saubleunitedchurch.ca/category/davids-blog/>

Maybe you've been praying for something for a long time, and it feels like heaven is silent. Maybe your heart feels pulled in many directions. This is your reminder: when you make God your greatest treasure, everything else finds its right place. Even when the waiting is long. Even when the answer is different than expected. Even when the path is narrow... God's presence will always be your greatest reward.

<https://youtu.be/RlgQ4qoZinU?si=AEYMO9j8cuiFi49k>

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



**"The first day is allways the hardest Claude...
which Sunday School class were you teaching?"**