Reformation Play-Doh Children's Sermon

Scripture Text: Romans 3:19-28 and John 8: 31-36
Supplies: 1oz pots of Play Doh (these are found at many stores and typically is not very expensive)

Children's Sermon

Preparation

- Put the pots of Play Doh in a basket or other container in the worship space. You can hide it if you want to surprise the children with it

Sermon Time

- Gather the children together on the floor or in a comfy space in the sanctuary.
- Begin by discussing that today is Reformation Day.
    - The color of the day is Red for passion and the holy spirit that inspired Martin Luther and continues to inspire the church today
    - Reformation has the root of "Re-Form" which is about taking something and making it into something new or giving it a new shape.
    - The Holy Spirit inspires the church to keep listening for the word of God to help it respond to the needs of the world and help people - we are Re-Formed.
- Take out one Play Doh pot for yourself and hold it up to the children
    - Ask if they know what it is (they probably do!)
    - Ask when they have played with play doh and be prepared for a couple of stories
    - Tell them that you have enough for everyone and ask if they would like some too
    - Give out the Play Doh to everyone and help them open the lids since they can be difficult for small hands
- Encourage everyone to get their Play Doh out of the pots and start shaping it
    - As they begin to make forms ask them to name what they are creating
    - It's unlikely they will all make the same thing
    - When they change from one shape to another they are RE-FORMing the Play Doh
- As they continue to play with their play doh ask them about themselves
    - Are you the same kind of person you were when you were 1 year old?
    - Why aren't you the same?
    - Do you think you will always be the way you are right now?
- What happens to Play Doh when you leave it out too long? (it dries out and gets hard)
    - Do you know how you can get it to be moldable again?
        - You add a few drops of water and work it in your hands
- Where in the sanctuary do we have water?
    - The baptismal font!
    - In our baptism God washes us clean and embraces us in love.
    - God's love cannot dry out and it will be with us no matter how many times we change and re-form in our lives.

At the end of the children's sermon there are a couple of options

- Have the kids put the Play Doh back in the pots and send them back to their seats
- Give them the Play Doh and make sure they ask the permission of their grown-ups before they play with it at church or at home
- Bring out more Play Doh for the rest of the congregation and have the kids give it out to everyone together. This can lead into a larger sermon about being reformed as well.