



Bible Point

We are the church, and we take care of each other.

Bible Verse

“The believers met together...and shared everything they had” (Acts 2:44).

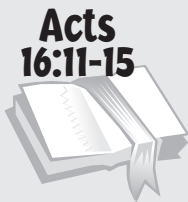
Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- experience being served and cared for,
 - hear how Lydia took care of Paul and his companions,
 - help Whiskers think of ways to care, and
 - sing a song about caring for others in the church.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Lydia invites Paul into her home.



Acts
16:11-15

There must not have been a synagogue in Philippi. It took 10 Jewish males to constitute a synagogue, but Jewish men must have been lacking. Instead, a group of Jewish or God-fearing women met at an informal meeting place outside the city. Paul and his team found this meeting and told the women there about Jesus.

Lydia, the leader of this little group, was a dealer in purple cloth. Purple dye was extremely costly, and anyone able to deal in it had to be wealthy. For a woman to be successful and wealthy on her own was unusual in that culture, and it says a lot about Lydia. This woman was the first person in Europe who Paul led to faith in Christ.

In inviting Paul and his missionary team to stay at her house, Lydia offered generous hospitality. Perhaps as time went on, her generosity served as an example to the entire church that developed at Philippi, because this was the only congregation that remembered what Paul had done for its members and regularly sent him gifts to support his ministry.

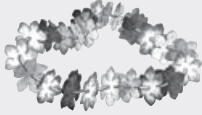






Prayer

- Read Psalm 37:25-26.
- How are you generous? How do you need to grow in this quality?
- Pray: Lord, you have been generous with love, grace, and friendship. Help me to demonstrate the generosity you've shown to me as I...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

| | What Children Will Do | Classroom Supplies | Learning Lab Supplies |
|---|---|--|---|
| Welcome Time | Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher. | “Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape | |
| Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives. | Option 1: Turning Purple —Watch their napkins turn purple, and hear how Lydia sold purple cloth. | Purple drink mix, plastic tablecloth, napkins, paper towels, shallow tub | |
| | Option 2: Caring Cards —Make cards for shut-ins, and hear how the church takes care of each other. | Colored construction paper, glue sticks, crayons |  |
| | Option 3: Welcome Home —Host doll and stuffed animal “guests,” and hear how Lydia opened her home to Paul. | Dolls and stuffed animals, play dishes, table or tablecloth | |
| | Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time. | CD player |  |
| Bible Story Time | Setting the Stage —Take care of classmates by serving them snacks. | Pillow, bowl, toy, small crackers, napkins, baby wipes | |
| | Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together. | Bible, CD player |  |
| | Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Act out a story from Acts 16 about Lydia serving Paul and his friends. | Bible, long rope or string, tape, pitcher of water or juice, cups | |
| | Do the Bible Story —Put together a puzzle picture of Lydia sharing her home, and sing a Bible verse song. | Bible, CD player, scissors |  |
| Closing  | A Little Invitation —Teach Whiskers ways to care for friends at church. | |  |
| | We Are the Church —Sing a song about being the church. | CD player |  |

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, markers, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s lesson. Use questions such as “Who did you pray for this week?” and “Can you tell me about a time that Jesus answered your prayers?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► we are the church, and we take care of each other.**
- Hand out the Easter lily name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate between the activities to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Who takes care of you?” or “What could you do to help take care of someone?”

■ Option 1: Turning Purple

SUPPLIES: purple drink mix, plastic tablecloth, napkins, paper towels, shallow tub

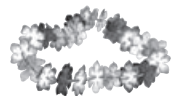
Before class, prepare a pitcher of grape Kool-Aid or other purple fruit drink. Cover a table with a plastic tablecloth, and have plenty of paper towels on hand.

Pour the purple liquid into a shallow tub, and set it on the table. Give each child a napkin, and demonstrate how to dip one corner of the napkin into the purple liquid and hold it there. Have the children watch as their napkins gradually turn purple. Explain that today’s Bible story is about a woman in the early church who sold purple cloth. Tell children how Lydia cared for Paul and his companions. Remind them that ► we are the church, and we take care of each other.



■ Option 2: Caring Cards

SUPPLIES: colored construction paper, glue sticks, crayons



Before class, cut the *flower lei* and separate the flowers from the string.

Set out construction paper, glue sticks, and crayons. Give each child flowers. Encourage children to decorate their flowers and glue them to the construction paper to create cards. Tell the children that ► we are the church, and we take care of each



other. Explain that you'll give their cards to people in the church who are sick or lonely. If some children want to keep their cards, encourage them to make extras to give away.

■ Option 3: Welcome Home

SUPPLIES: dolls and stuffed animals, play dishes, table or tablecloth

Set up a home center in one area of your room where children can practice taking care of each other by showing hospitality. Provide dolls and stuffed animals, play dishes, and a table or tablecloth. Encourage children to pretend to cook a meal for the dolls and animals, set the table, and serve the "meal" they've prepared. As they're playing, tell them that today's Bible story is about a woman who shared her home with Paul and his friends. Remind children that ► we are the church, and we take care of each other.



When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: pillow, bowl, toy, small crackers, napkins, baby wipes

Tell the children you'll turn the lights off and on to get their attention. Explain that when you flash the lights, the children are to stop what they're doing and be quiet. Encourage them to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Made a napkin turn purple; made a card; cooked dinner for the dolls.)

Say: **Some of you made a card to give to people who are too sick to come to church, some of you served pretend food to animal friends, and some of you made napkins turn purple. You were all learning important things about our Bible story.**



Today we're going to hear about a woman named Lydia who sold purple cloth. That's why some of you turned your napkins purple. Lydia believed in Jesus, and she took care of Paul and his friends in the early church. We are the church today, and we can take care of each other just as Lydia took care of Paul. Let's practice caring for each other now.

Have the children sit in a circle. Set a pillow, a bowl, and a toy in the center. Pick up the pillow, pass it around, and say: **Look at this pillow. Can you think of some ways you could use a pillow like this to take care of someone?** (Bring it to someone who's sick; let my baby brother use it for a booster chair.)

Hold up the bowl and ask:

- **What could you do with this bowl to show someone you care?** (Set the table; help with the dishes; clear the table; help make cookies; carry food to the table.)

Hold up the toy and ask:

- **What about this toy? What could you do with this toy to care for someone?** (Put it away; share it with a friend; give it to someone who doesn't have any toys.)

Say: **There are lots of ways you can take care of others. We're going to practice one now. Then you can try it at home.**

Form pairs and have children clean their hands. (Be a partner if you have an uneven number of children.) Set out a stack of napkins or paper towels and a large bowl of small crackers. Say: **I'd like the partner who's wearing the most blue to ask your partner, "Would you like some crackers?" If your partner says "yes," you may come up and get a napkin and some crackers for your partner.**

Have children serve their partners, and then say: **Now I'd like the other partner to do the same thing. Ask your partner, "Would you like some crackers?" If your partner says "yes," you may come up and get him or her some crackers.**

As children enjoy their crackers, ask about other ways they can take care of family members or friends. Then say: **One way we can show we care is by helping. Let's all help by throwing away our napkins. Then we'll hear our Bible story.**



If some children don't want any crackers, that's OK. Tell their partners that they can show they care by respecting others' needs and not forcing them to eat crackers if they don't want to.

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.

Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *church stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *church stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for [name of child who brought the Bible], and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

**teacher
tips**

Remind children that each one will get a turn to bring you the Bible as the weeks go by—and be sure you keep track of who the Bible person is each week so that each child has an opportunity to serve in this way.



■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, long rope or string, tape, pitcher of water or juice, cups

Create a boat outline on the floor with rope or string. Use masking tape to hold down the corners. Make the boat outline large enough so all the children can sit inside. Set a pitcher of water or juice and cups on a table or counter.

Invite children to step into the boat and sit down. Briefly review last week's lesson about praying, and ask if anyone wants to tell the class about an answer to prayer they've received. Give children time to respond. If there are no reports, share one of your own. Remind children that ► *we are the church, and we take care of each other.*

Open the Bible to **Acts 16**, and show it to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Acts in the Bible. Today we're going to act out the Bible story as we hear it. Today's story is about a man named Paul who traveled around to tell people about Jesus. Sometimes he had to sail on a boat to get to faraway places. Right now we're going to pretend we're with Paul on one of his journeys. Can you feel the wind blow? The waves are making the boat dip and rock.**

Sway back and forth as you pretend to be in a rocking boat. Encourage children to help you make wind sounds as you continue:

Sometimes we sail with Paul for days and days. But on this trip we're sailing straight to an island called Samothrace. Can you say Samothrace? Let children respond.



Look over there! I see land! It must be Samothrace. Point to another part of the room. **The boat is landing. We can get out now. Let's look around and see what's on this island.** Look around and have children tell you about things they see.

We can't stay here long. Tomorrow we have to go to another city. We better get back on the boat. Climb on board. Here we go. We're sailing on the waves again. Rock back and forth and make wind sounds. **Do you see land yet? Look around the room. I think we're almost there. Whew! We made it. Now we'll have to get out of the boat and walk for a while.**

Get out of the boat and lead children around the room several times. Say: **Can you see that city in the distance? That's Philippi. We're almost there. Paul says we're going to stay in Philippi for a few days.**

Let's help Paul tell the people in Philippi about Jesus. We'll tell them that Jesus is alive. Let's all say that together. Jesus is alive!

Paul wants us to talk about Jesus to everyone we meet. Let's say, "Jesus loves you" to each other. Let children walk around and tell one another, "Jesus loves you."

We've been telling a lot of people about Jesus. Now Paul wants us to go with him outside the city to find a place where we can pray together. Remember, ►we are the church, and we take care of each other. Let's walk out through the city gates. Lead children in walking.

Point to an area of the room and say: **There's a nice place by the river. I see some women are already sitting there. Maybe we can tell them about Jesus, too. Maybe they'd like to pray with us. Let's sit down and listen carefully to what Paul is saying. He's telling the women by the river about Jesus.**

Sit down, and then say: **One of the women is named Lydia. Lydia sells purple cloth in the marketplace every day. She's been paying close attention to Paul, and she's decided to believe in Jesus. Let's shout "hooray!"**

Lead children in cheering for Lydia. Then say: **Lydia has invited Paul to stay with her. Paul wants us to come, too. Let's get up and go to Lydia's house with Paul.**

Lead children to the table and sit down. Say: **I think Lydia probably gave Paul and his friends something to eat and drink while they were staying with her. Let's pretend we're in Lydia's house and have something to drink now.**

Serve everyone a drink. When children finish their drinks, ask:

- **How did Lydia take care of others?** (She gave Paul and his friends a place to stay; she gave them food; she was nice.)
- **How should we treat people when they visit us?** (Be nice to them; give them something to eat; share our toys.)



If someone in your church has a large inflatable raft, ask if you can borrow it for this activity. Children will love climbing in and out of a real boat!





Say: **Lydia loved Jesus so much that she wanted to take care of Paul and his friends when they needed a place to stay. We can take care of others just as she did. ► We are the church, and we take care of each other. We do this because we love Jesus so much. Let's tell Jesus how much we love him right now!**

Pray: **Dear Jesus, we love you and thank you for being our friend. Help us to show your love to others by taking care of them like you do. In your name, amen.**

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player, scissors



Before class, take out Poster 3 of the “*We Are the Church*” poster pack. Cut along the dotted lines on the back to make puzzle pieces.

Bring out the puzzles from the last two weeks’ lessons. If you had to take the last two weeks’ sections of the puzzle apart, be sure to put them together before class.



Say: **Our puzzle will help us retell our Bible story.** Hand each child a puzzle piece. Help them put their pieces in place. When you’ve put the whole section together, have children tell you what’s happening in the picture.

Ask: • **How did Lydia take care of Paul and his friends?** (She gave them food; she invited them to her house; she let them stay with her.)

• **What are some ways we can take care of people?** (Ask someone to come over for dinner; play with my younger brother or sister; help mom or dad; say hello when someone new comes to class.)

Say: **There are lots of ways we can take care of each other.** Show children where today’s Bible verse is found in the Bible. **Our Bible verse is Acts 2:44, and it says, ► “The believers met together...and shared everything they had.”** Sharing is one way to take care of someone. Or you can say hello when a new person comes to class. You can play with that new person and make them feel welcome. You can play with your brother or sister. We’re never too young or too old to show we care about others. ► **We are the church, and we take care of each other.** Let’s sing our Bible verse song to remind us of this.

Lead children in singing “Believers Share” (Acts 2:44) (track 5) to the tune of “Do Your Ears Hang Low?” with the CD.



**The believers met together
And shared everything they had.
They loved to be together
As it made them feel so glad.
The believers met together
And shared everything they had.
They shared what they had.**

(Repeat.)

Put the puzzles aside until next week.

BIBLE VERSE ►



BIBLE POINT ►

Closing

■ *a Little Invitation*

SUPPLIES: none

Bring out Whiskers, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



- • • • •
- **Whiskers:** (*Excitedly*) Hello, everybody! I have something to ask you!
- **Teacher:** What is it, Whiskers? You sound excited.
- **Whiskers:** I am! I was listening to your Bible story about Lydia. She sounded really nice!
- **Teacher:** Yes, she was. She was smart and successful. But best of all she loved the Lord and she was kind.
- **Whiskers:** I thought it was neat how she asked Paul and his friends to come and stay at her house. They became friends very quickly!
- **Teacher:** That's true, Whiskers. Lydia loved Jesus so much that she wanted to help his friends. She wanted to give them a place to eat and sleep.
- **Whiskers:** That's right—which reminds me of my idea! I want to be like Lydia. So I've decided to invite all of my friends in this class to come and stay at my house!
- **Teacher:** Oh, Whiskers, that's very thoughtful! I can see you've been listening to our lesson and learning that ► *we are the church, and we take care of each other.*
- **Whiskers:** (*Nods*) Yes. I love all of you. You're my friends. I love Jesus, too. I want to be like Lydia and have you come and stay with me. Please say yes! Will you come? Please?
- **Teacher:** There's only one problem, Whiskers.
- **Whiskers:** What problem? Don't you want to come?
- **Teacher:** We'd like to come, Whiskers. But your house is very little. It's mouse-sized. Even the littlest person in this class is much too big to fit into your house.
- **Whiskers:** (*Crying*) You're right. I didn't think of that. Oh, I wanted to be like Lydia! I'm too little! I'm always too little!
- **Teacher:** Oh, Whiskers. You're not too little. You're just right. Don't cry now. Maybe your friends can help you think of other things you can do to show us you care. Children, what are some things Whiskers can do for us?
- (*Give the children time to respond. Help them think of things that Whiskers can do such as playing with them, reading to them, or bringing a snack to share.*)
- **Whiskers:** I feel better already! I'm going to think about what you said. Maybe I'll plan something special for next week! Goodbye. I love you all. You're the best friends a little mouse could have!

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■ We Are the Church



BIBLE POINT ▶

SUPPLIES: CD player



Say: ▶ **We are the church, and we take care of each other.** Let's sing a song about that now. First we'll sing about sharing with each other and praying together, and then we'll sing about caring for each other. It's fun to be part of God's church!

Lead children in singing and doing the motions to the first four verses of "We Are the Church" with the CD (track 19) to the tune of "Ten Little Indians."



SING

We are the church. Oh yes, we are. (Point to self; on the word "church," touch hands over head.)

We are the church. Oh yes, we are. (Point to self; touch hands over head.)

We are the church. Oh yes, we are. (Point to self; touch hands over head.)

We are the church! (Point to self; touch hands over head.)

We share with each other. (Hold out palms to indicate giving.)

We share with each other. (Hold out palms.)

We share with each other. (Hold out palms.)

We are the church! (Point to self; touch hands over head.)

We are the church. We pray together. (Point to self; on the word "church," touch hands over head; fold hands.)

We are the church. We pray together. (Point to self; touch hands over head, fold hands.)

We are the church. We pray together. (Point to self; touch hands over head, fold hands.)

We are the church! (Point to self; touch hands over head.)

We take care of each other. (Pat someone's shoulder.)

We take care of each other. (Pat someone else's shoulder.)

We take care of each other. (Put your arm around someone.)

We are the church! (Point to self; touch hands over head.)



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Lydia Says**

Say: **Let's play a game to help us remember some ways we can show we care. I'll be Lydia. When Lydia says to do something, you follow me and do it.**

Have children follow you as you do each of the following actions. Be sure to say, "Lydia says" before each action.

- Wake up and stretch.
- Help make breakfast.
- Wake everyone up.
- Tell them breakfast is ready.
- Sit down at the table.
- Serve everyone.
- Help wash the dishes.
- Help dry the dishes.
- Help make the beds.
- Lie down to rest!

As you're lying down, say: ► **We are the church, and we take care of each other.** Have children repeat it.

Repeat the game and let children be Lydia if they're interested. They can make up their own caring actions.

■ **Make to Take: Purple Sprinkle Pictures**

Cover a table or work area with a plastic tablecloth. Fill one or two saltshakers with grape powdered drink mix. Use a spray bottle to lightly spray sheets of paper with water. The paper should be wet but not soaked. Give one sheet of wet paper to each child.

Set out the drink-mix shakers and show the children how to sprinkle the powder onto the paper. Watch what happens to the powder when it touches the water. As children make their purple sprinkle pictures, review the story of Lydia. Remind children that ► **we are the church, and we take care of each other.**

■ **Treat to Eat: Purple Delight**



Give each child a small bowl or cup of vanilla pudding and a plastic spoon. Help them add blueberries to their pudding and stir it to make it purple, like Lydia's dress. As children enjoy the snack, have them share ways they can show they care. Remind them that ► **we are the church, and we take care of each other.**



■ **Story Picture: Lydia Opens Her Home to Paul**

Give each child a copy of the "Today I Learned..." handout. Set out small scraps of purple fabric or trim, purple construction paper, or purple tissue paper. Let children use glue sticks to glue the purple scraps to Lydia's clothing in the picture. As they work, review the ways Lydia cared for Paul and his friends. Remind children that ► **we are the church, and we take care of each other.**

Today I learned... We are the church, and we take care of each other.

Help me learn this:

"The believers met together...and shared everything they had" (Acts 2:44).

Ask me:

- How did Lydia take care of Paul and his friends?
- What are some ways you can take care of people?
- Who can our family care for this week?

Family Fun

- Mix shaving cream and one or two drops of blue and red food coloring in a pie pan, and let your child "paint" with the purple shaving cream in the bathtub. Be sure to supervise so your child doesn't get "paint" in his or her eyes. Cleanup is easy—just rinse! Ask your child to tell you the story of Lydia.
- Help your child practice hospitality by inviting a friend over for lunch. Let your child plan the menu or activities. Talk about caring ways to treat guests, such as sharing toys or serving food or drink.

Lesson 12

Today your child learned that **WE ARE THE CHURCH, AND WE TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER.** Children heard how Lydia served Paul and his friends in her home. They practiced caring by serving a snack to a friend.

Lydia Opens Her Home to Paul (Acts 16:11-15)

