11. Peter in Prison (Acts 12:1-17)

"As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Peter in Prison
Prayer Chain
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversation
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Door Card
Door Rituals
Loving God, Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: CD player | DVD player | Projector or screen | Television | Card stock | Craft glue | Crayons | Markers | Offering basket | Paper | Pencils | Scissors | Stapler | Tape

Gather: Bell | Carpet squares | Paper cutter

Explore: Bell

Respond: Bell | Candle | Carpet squares | Multipurpose lighter

Bless: No additional supplies

Before You Teach

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, we are told to "pray continually." Philippians 4:6 says to "bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers." In Ephesians 6:18, we are told to "offer prayers and petitions in the Spirit all the time." The message seems clear—we are to pray! Peter's friends in the early church took these teachings to heart. Peter was in prison as a result of King Herod's persecution of Christians. The outlook for Peter was bleak. What could his fellow Christians do? They could pray!

Even though Peter's friends were praying for him, they probably did not expect Peter to be freed from prison. It is not likely they were praying for an angel to rescue Peter from prison. If they were, they might not have been so surprised and unbelieving when Peter appeared at their door. It is possible Peter's friends did not know specifically what result they should pray for; they simply knew the response to this situation, as it is in any situation, was prayer.

God heard the prayers lifted up on Peter's behalf, and God answered the prayers. However, the answer was unexpected—God sent an angel to rescue Peter from prison. The female servant who answered the door when Peter arrived was so surprised to see him, she closed the door and left Peter standing outside! She then had a difficult time convincing the others that Peter was indeed at the door. Even though they were in prayer for Peter, this was not what they expected.

This story contains some valuable reminders. First, we are reminded of the importance of praying for others. We can talk with God, not only about our own needs, but also about the needs of others, for those we know and love, and even for those people unknown to us. Even when we are unsure what a person needs, we still can pray for them because God knows. Second, sometimes God answers our prayers in unexpected ways. We believe God hears and answers our prayers. We need to remember the answer may not be the one we were expecting.

Permission is granted to duplicate this page for local church use only. © 2019 Cokesbury

11. Peter in Prison (Acts 12:1-17)

"As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display your choice of an attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16-17 or pp. 18 & 15).

- Play "Changed" (Annual Music CD).
- Welcome and greet each child as they enter the room.
- Indicate the location of the offering basket.
- Help children mark their attendance inside the building on the Community Attendance Chart (opt.).

A—Peter in Prison (Activity Sheet)

Before class: Obtain Activity Sheets (Session 11).

- Distribute "Surprise"/"Unlock" (pp. 23-24).
- Encourage the children to follow the journaling prompt and complete the activities.

OR

B—Prayer Chain (Craft)

Before class: Obtain paper cutter. Cut paper into 2" rectangular strips.

- Distribute paper strips. Invite the children to write or draw one prayer request on the strip. If the children have more than one prayer request, they may use more than one strip.
- Connect all strips by stapling them together into a chain.

SAY: In today's Bible story, we will learn about Peter who prayed for help to God. We can always pray when we need help.

- Hang up the prayer chain.
- Keep extra strips available should children remember more prayer requests.

Transition to Explore

Before class: Obtain bell and carpet squares.

- Ring the bell to acknowledge that it is time to transition.
- Direct the children to choose carpet squares (or equivalent items), then sit in a circle on the floor.

Permission is granted to duplicate this page for local church use only. © 2019 Cokesbury

11. Peter in Prison (Acts 12:1-17)

"As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

EXPLORE

Sacred Conversation

- Ask a few wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- What made you laugh this week?
- How did you help someone this week?
- What are you grateful for?
- Was there a difficult part of your week, and what made it better?
- Where did you see God this week?

Hear and See the Bible Story

Before class: Prepare television and DVD player.

- Read the Bible story *(CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible—Acts 12:1-17)*.
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure DVD Session 11.

ASK: How do you feel when someone comes back?

Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets (Session 11).

- Distribute the Bible Story Sheets and draw attention to Bible Story Retelling (p. 1).
- Assign the five roles, then present "Peter in Prison."

Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display Poster: Unit 3 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 14 & 19). Review Unit 3 sign language (Leader Guide—p. 96).

- Recite the Bible verse: "As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).
- Invite the children to say and sign the Bible verse with you.

Transition to Respond

Before class: Obtain bell.

- Ring the bell, then invite the children to put away their carpet squares.

Permission is granted to duplicate this page for local church use only. © 2019 Cokesbury

RESPOND

A—Door Card (Art)

Before class: Photocopy on card stock "Door Card" (Leader Guide—p. 72), one per child.

- Distribute photocopies of "Door Card." Direct the children to decorate the card, then cut it out.

SAY: Rhoda forgot to let Peter in the door. When Peter was finally let in, he wanted to spread the message of Jesus to his friends.

- Encourage the children to give the door card to someone special and to share the message of Jesus.

OR

B—Door Rituals (Movement)

SAY: Peter was stuck at the gates. Rhoda was so excited to see him, she forgot to let him in. That's pretty silly. Something special we can do to remember the story is to find special ways to greet each other as we come into and leave the Sunday-school space.

- Demonstrate the following door greeting options, or create your own:
  - High five
  - Fist bump
  - Hug
  - Wave
- Practice your greeting with each child when they leave the room.

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Obtain Map 7: Deep Blue Shores (Class Kit—p. 8) and the cut out Figures/Pieces: Deep Blue Shores Map 7 (Class Kit—p. 25). Display Mission Poster (Class Kit—p. 5).

- Display the Deep Blue Shores Map 7 on the floor or table. While the children interact with the map and figures, talk about the mission. Share the information on the mission poster.

SAY: We are learning about the John Wesley Community Centre. The mission organization helps children and families in South Africa. They offer services for children who are sick or their family members who might be ill.

SAY: Let's say a prayer for the John Wesley Community Centre.

- Invite a child to lead the prayer.

Transition to Bless

Before class: Obtain bell, candle, multipurpose lighter (or battery-operated candle), carpet squares.

- Ring the bell to signal transition.
- Direct the children to choose carpet squares, then sit in a circle on the floor.
- Light a candle to symbolize that this is a special time together *(optional)*.

Permission is granted to duplicate this page for local church use only. © 2019 Cokesbury

11. Peter in Prison (Acts 12:1-17)

"As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Continue to display Poster: Unit 3 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 14 & 19) where it is easily accessible for children. Obtain envelope containing cut out Poster Pieces: Unit 3 Bible Verse Poster (Class Kit—p. 27).

- Gather the children around the Bible-verse poster.
- Display the poster pieces.
- Invite a child to attach to the poster the "Peter in Prison" poster piece.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for the example of Peter who shows us how important it is to pray. Amen.

Praising

Before class: Obtain CD player and Deep Blue Song Sheets.

- Distribute the song sheets for "Changed" (Annual Music CD).
- Sing the song "Changed" (Annual Music CD).
- Collect the song sheets and store until the next session.

Blessing

SAY: This month the Bible stories are about spreading the message of Jesus.

ASK: Who remembers today's Bible verse?

SAY: Together let's shout out our love for Jesus.

- Invite the children to follow your instructions.
    - Whisper: "I love Jesus."
    - Turn to your neighbor and say, "I love Jesus."
    - Shout: "I love Jesus."
    - Say, "Amen."

At Home with God

Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets leaflets.

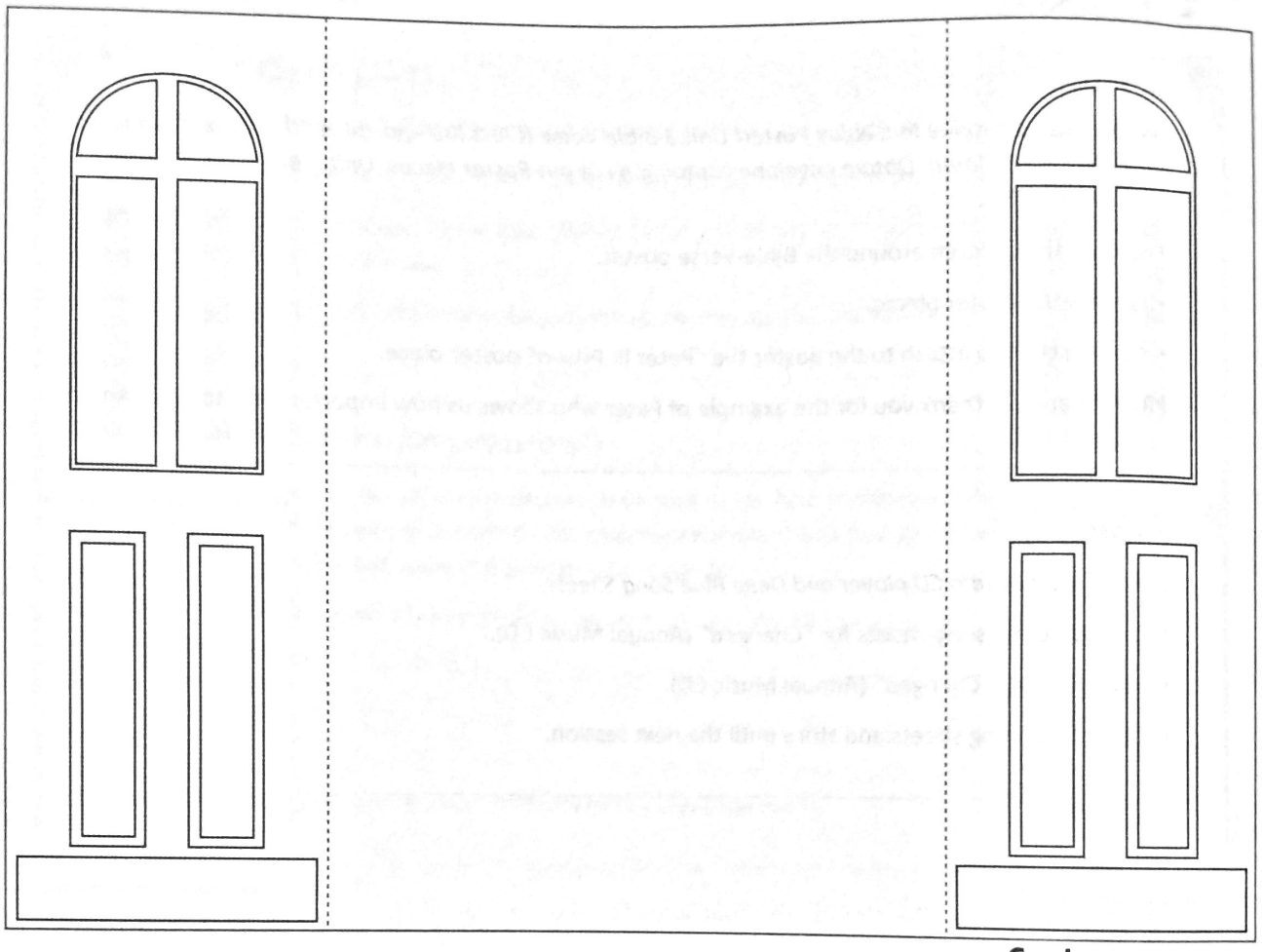
ASK: What is one thing that you learned today? Can you share with your family what you learned?

- Send home with each child Bible Story Sheets—Session 11 leaflet.

Permission is granted to duplicate this page for local church use only. © 2019 Cokesbury

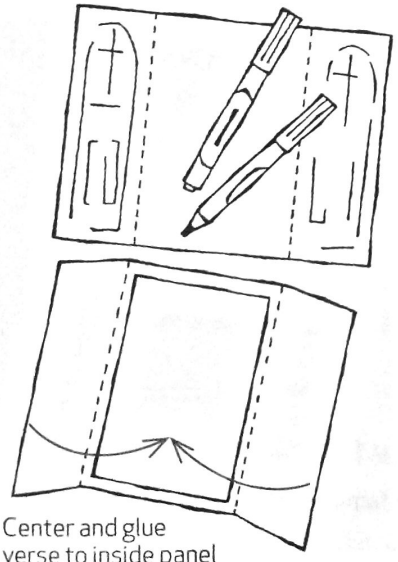
11. Peter in Prison (Acts 12:1-17)

Door Card

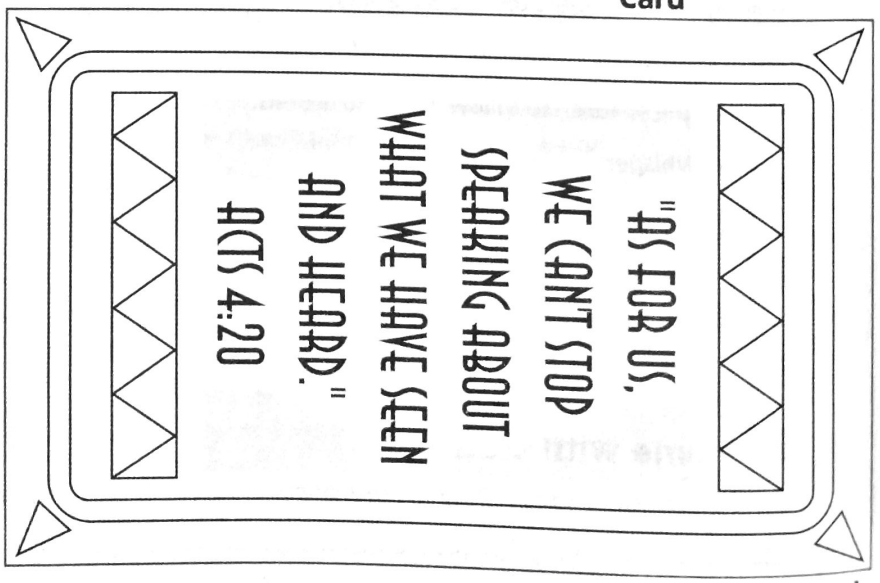


Card

Cut out card, color, flip to other side, fold doors to meet in center of card.



Center and glue verse to inside panel of card. Close doors, open to show verse.



Verse Insert Card

Permission is granted to duplicate this page for local church use only. © 2019 Cokesbury