

The Church Prays for Peter in Prison

Lesson 11



Scripture: Acts 12:1-17

Bible Memory: Acts 5:42

“They continued to tell the Good News—that Jesus is the Christ.” (*ICB*)

“They ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (*KJV*)

Focus: ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.











Heart to Heart Teacher Devotion

Right now, before you study the lesson or gather materials, pray for yourself and others in your church who are preparing lessons this week. Pray for your minister, worship leader, musicians, and others as they prepare to lead in the worship service. Pray for missionaries who are making great sacrifices to take the message of Jesus to people who would never know Jesus if they did not go. Pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Bible Background for the Teacher

Herod Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great. In order to please the Jewish leaders, he had already killed James the apostle (the brother of John and son of Zebedee). Now Herod was planning to kill the apostle Peter. Herod ordered four squads of four guards each (on three-hour shifts) to guard Peter. The miraculous release of Peter is evident, as he would have been chained to two soldiers, with two more guards at the door.

Lesson 11 at a Glance

		HeartShaper Materials	Other Materials
<p>1 GETTING STARTED Use one or more of these learning centers to help children <i>explore what the church does</i>.</p>	 Quick Step Say a Prayer  Building a Church  We Are the Church (unit center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none • none • <i>Resources</i> CD, <i>Resources</i> CD C-H-U-R-C-H printable file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none • blocks, toy people • CD player, blank paper, masking tape
<p>2 BIBLE DISCOVERY Use all these activities to help children <i>tell what happened when the church prayed for Peter</i>.</p>	 Sing and Pray  Bible Time The Church Prays for Peter in Prison  Bible Review  Bible Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Resources</i> CD, <i>Teaching Picture</i> 11, <i>Resources</i> sheet 7 • Bible story cards 11a-11c, <i>Resources</i> CD Unit 2 Bible Memory Motions printable file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD player, Bible, 3 rulers, masking tape
<p>3 GROW AND GO Use one or more of these learning centers to help children <i>pray for people who tell others about Jesus</i>.</p>	 Quick Step Prayer Reminder Painting  Praying for Jesus' Helpers  Prayer Pennants Closing the Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Make-n-Share</i> WATERPAINT™ picture for lesson 11, <i>Teaching Picture</i> 11 • <i>Resources</i> CD • <i>Make-n-Share</i> for lesson 11 and stickers • <i>Heart Tugs</i> issue 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paintbrushes, cups of water, paper towels • CD player • blunt-tip scissors, washable markers, tape, plastic straws • none

Getting Started (10-15 minutes)

- 1 Use one or more of these learning centers to help children **explore what the church does.**

Welcome

- Use a Scout puppet to greet the children.
- Place a name tag on each child, gather necessary information from the adult bringing the child; then guide the child to a learning center.
- Provide a container in which children can place their offering money.

Quick Step Say a Prayer

SAY: ♥ **We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. That is one of the things the church does. Let's be the church and pray for each other.**

Have children walk under a "bridge" formed by two people. Sing these words to "London Bridge": **We are going to say a prayer, say a prayer, say a prayer. We are going to say a prayer for this child.** Have the "bridge" lower their arms on the word *child*. Say a sentence prayer for the child caught. Continue until every child has been caught and prayed for.

ASK: **Who are some people in our church whom we can pray for? The church prays. What are some other things the church does?**
(listens, tells, goes, helps, sing)

Building a Church

SAY: **The church does lots of different things. We worship, pray, give, and serve. Today we are talking about praying. ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Let's build a church building as we talk about the church.**

Guide children to work together to build a church building. Use the toy people to show what the church does. The people could be singing and worshipping, doing a service project, learning in a class, and so forth.

ASK: **What does the church do? What do you do as part of the church?**

We Are the Church (unit center)

Before class, print two sets (or more) of C-H-U-R-C-H from the CD. Tape the papers on the floor in a circle with blank papers in between.

SAY: ♥ **We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. That is one thing the church does. Let's play a game to discover some other things the church does.**

Talk briefly about the picture on each letter. Have each child stand on a letter or blank paper. Play "Yes, I Will Go" as the children move around the circle. Stop the music. The children standing on the letters C can tell what the church does. Play again, using each letter in the word *church*.

ASK: **What does the church do? What do you like about the church? What is your favorite thing to do as the church?**

Especially for 4s!

When the music stops, the children can name what is pictured on the paper. Say together, "We are the church!"

Focus

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Something More!

Tape black crepe-paper streamers from the top of the door frame to the floor. Tell the children they will be learning about someone who was in prison.

Materials

none



It will be helpful for some children to take their turn last, or after many other children have had a chance to participate, in order to see this modeled for them first.

Materials

blocks, toy people



Materials

Resources CD track 3 and C-H-U-R-C-H printable file, CD player, blank paper, masking tape



Cleanup

Assign specific cleanup tasks. As children do their jobs, say, "Thank you for serving. Thank you for being part of the church."



Focus

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Bible Discovery (20–25 minutes)

2 Use all these activities to help children **tell what happened when the church prayed for Peter.**

Materials

Resources CD tracks 3 and 6, CD player, Teaching Picture 11, Bible



Materials

Resources sheet 7 Bible story cards 11a–11c, Bible, 3 rulers (or paint-stirring sticks), masking tape



Before Class

Tape a ruler to the back of each card, as illustrated.



Teaching Tip

If you have a smaller class, have children remain as one large group and say all the responses together.

Materials

Resources sheet 7 Bible story cards 11a–11c



Materials

Resources CD Unit 2 Bible Memory Motions printable file, Bible



Sing and Pray

Sing “Yes, I Will Go” and “They Continued to Tell.”

PRAY: **Dear God, thank You for the church. We like being part of the church. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

ASK: **What do you say when you pray? How has God answered your prayers?** Allow discussion; then show the picture. **Today’s Bible story is about God’s people who prayed. It’s from the New Testament book of Acts, chapter 12.** Show Acts 12. **Let’s see what happened when they prayed.**

Bible Time

Divide children into three groups. When you hold up card 11a, group 1 should say “Preach, Peter, preach”; card 11b, group 2 says “Guard, soldiers, guard”; and card 11c, group 3 says, “Pray, people, pray.” Practice responses.

SAY: **Peter** (show 11a; let children respond) **had been telling others about Jesus, but a bad king didn’t like Jesus. Even though it wasn’t fair, the king had soldiers take Peter to prison (show 11b) to make Peter stop telling others about Jesus. Sixteen soldiers took turns guarding Peter. Peter was chained to two soldiers while two others guarded the prison gate. The king made sure Peter was not going to escape from prison.**

While Peter (show 11a) **was in prison (show 11b), some followers of Jesus (show 11c) were meeting. These people were praying for Peter.** Show 11a.

That night an angel of the Lord came to the prison. Show 11b. **The angel said to Peter, “Get up!” The chains fell off Peter’s hands. The angel led Peter past the soldiers and through the gate, which opened by itself. Peter (show 11a) knew that God had sent the angel to save him.**

Peter went to the house where the people (show 11c) were praying. When he got there, Peter (show 11a) knocked on the door. A girl named Rhoda went to the door. When she heard Peter’s voice, she was so excited that she forgot to open the door. Rhoda ran back and said, “Peter is at the door!”

Peter knocked again. When the people (show 11c) finally let him in, Peter (show 11a) told them about the angel at the prison. Show 11b. **The people (show 11c) were so glad they had prayed for Peter.** Show 11a.

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus too.

Bible Review

Hold up each card one by one. Have the children say the words on the cards and tell what parts of the Bible story the cards remind them of.

ASK: **Why did a king put Peter in prison?** (He told others about Jesus.)

What did the people do? (prayed)

Who did the angel help? (Peter)

Bible Memory Acts 5:42

Before class, print and display the motions from the CD.

SAY: **Peter and the followers of Jesus did what our Bible Memory talks about.** Point to Acts 5:42 as you read it aloud. Have the children say the verse after you, repeating it several times while doing the motions.

Grow and Go (15–20 minutes)

3 Use one or more of these learning centers to help children **pray for people who tell others about Jesus.**

Focus

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Quick Step Prayer Reminder Painting

SAY: The picture we paint today will remind us that ♥ we can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Give each child a picture, a cup of water, a paintbrush, and a paper towel. Show how to dip the brush, dab off excess water, and then paint. Display the teaching picture and review the Bible story as the children paint. Talk about people who tell about Jesus, both in your home country and abroad. Lead children in praying for some of those individuals.

ASK: Who prayed in our Bible story today? (the followers of Jesus)

Who do you know who tells about Jesus? Name children in class and what you have seen them do to tell others about Jesus.

What can you say when you pray for someone?

Materials

Make-n-Share

WATERPAINT™ picture for lesson 11, paintbrushes (or cotton swabs), cups of water, paper towels, *Teaching Picture 11*



Materials

Resources CD track 6, CD player



Praying for Jesus' Helpers

SAY: ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Our Bible Memory talks about telling about Jesus. Let's sing our Bible Memory song and pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Sing "They Continued to Tell." Then guide children to name people they know who tell about Jesus. Prompt them by giving names of the church staff, missionaries, church teachers, and people who sing or play instruments. Remind them of Sunday school teachers they used to have. Ask volunteers to pray for these people.

ASK: Who do we know who tells about Jesus?

What can we say when we pray for these people?

Prayer Pennants

SAY: ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Let's make prayer pennants that will help us remember to pray for people who tell others about Jesus.

Assist children as needed in completing their pennants. As children work, talk about people they know who tell others about Jesus. When finished, have the children hold their pennants as you pray for some of the people named.

ASK: Where will you put your prayer pennant to remind you to pray?

Who do you know who tells others about Jesus?

What can you say when you pray for other people?

Especially for 4s!

Provide photos of four or five people (whom the children will recognize) who tell about Jesus. Talk about how those people tell about Jesus. Have children hold the photos as you pray for those people.

Materials

Make-n-Share for lesson 11 and stickers, blunt-tip scissors, washable markers (or crayons), tape (or glue), plastic straws (or unsharpened pencils)



Closing the Hour

• Be sure children who are leaving have their activity projects and a copy of *Heart Tugs*. Encourage parents to help their children complete the What Can You Say? activity. Note: *A Family Together Time* page is available online for families to download. See www.heartshaper.com.

The Church Prays for Peter in Prison

Lesson 11 Extra Hour



Scripture: Acts 12:1-17

Bible Memory: Acts 5:42

“They continued to tell the Good News—that Jesus is the Christ.” (*ICB*)

“They ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (*KJV*)

Focus: ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Heart to Heart Teacher Devotion

Right now, before you study the lesson or gather materials, pray for yourself and others in your church who are preparing lessons this week. Pray for your minister, worship leader, musicians, and others as they prepare to lead in the worship service. Pray for missionaries who are making great sacrifices to take the message of Jesus to people who would never know Jesus if they did not go. Pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Bible Background for the Teacher

Herod Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great. In order to please the Jewish leaders, he had already killed James the apostle (the brother of John and son of Zebedee). Now Herod was planning to kill the apostle Peter. Herod ordered four squads of four guards each (on three-hour shifts) to guard Peter. The miraculous release of Peter is evident, as he would have been chained to two soldiers, with two more guards at the door.

Lesson 11 at a Glance—Extra Hour

1 MORE! GETTING STARTED

Use one or more of these learning centers to help children *explore what the church does*.



Quick Step
Church-at-Work Mural



Prayer Meeting



“Yes, We Are the Church”

HeartShaper Materials

- none

- none

- none

Other Materials

- roll paper, washable markers, reusable adhesive

- crackers, cups of water, Bibles, other family living center items (see activity)

- none

2 MORE! BIBLE DISCOVERY

Use all these activities to help children *tell what happened when the church prayed for Peter*.



More! Sing and Pray



Bible Time—Another Way!
The Church Prays for Peter in Prison



More! Bible Review



More! Bible Memory

- *Resources* CD, *Teaching Picture* 11, Church-at-Work mural from More! Getting Started, *Resources* CD Unit 2 Bible Memory Motions printable file

- 1" x 8" strips of paper, CD player, Bible, tape

3 MORE! GROW AND GO

Use one or more of these learning centers to help children *pray for people who tell others about Jesus*.



Quick Step
Scout Puppet Story



Prayer Walk

Saying Good-bye

- none

- *Heart Tugs* issue 11

- *Heart Tugs* issue 11

- Scout puppet, small Bible

- colored pencils

- none

More! Getting Started (10–15 minutes)

- 1** Use one or more of these learning centers to help children **explore what the church does.**

Transition Time

- Greet new arrivers, giving each a name tag.
- Gather children to look at a photo album or view a video of activities your congregation has had, such as VBS, picnic, camping trip, mission trip. ASK: **What does our church do?**
- Serve a snack. Follow your congregation’s policy for restroom breaks.

Quick Step Church-at-Work Mural

Before class, draw a large church building on a big sheet of roll paper.

SAY: **In our Bible story today, we will learn about people who prayed for someone who told about Jesus. One thing we can do as the church is, ♥ we can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Let’s draw a big picture to show what else the church does.**

Spread the roll paper on the floor. Help children draw pictures of church people working. As they draw, talk about the different acts of service people in the church do and how important each is. Attach the mural to a wall.

ASK: **What are some things we do in our church building?**

Which job can you do with the church people?

Prayer Meeting

SAY: ♥ **We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Let’s pretend to be a family that has friends come to our house to read the Bible and pray together. Reading the Bible and praying together are two things the church does.**

Let the children play-act hosting guests, serving refreshments, sharing Bibles, and talking. They can pray with their visitors—for the preacher, the Bible teachers, the workers in the church, and others who tell others about Jesus—and tell their favorite Bible story. Make sure each child has an opportunity to invite someone into his “home.”

ASK: **What are you doing that the church does?**

What else does the church do?

Especially for 4s!

Give each child a job at the prayer meeting. One child could serve the snack. One child could pretend to read the Bible. One child could pray.

“Yes, We Are the Church”

SAY: **One thing the church does is pray. ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Let’s name some other things the church does.**

Sing the following words to the tune of “Here We Go ’Round the Mulberry Bush”: **This is the way we read our Bible, read our Bible, read our Bible. This is the way we read our Bible. Yes, we are the church.** Add appropriate motions to go with the lyrics. (Other verses: say our prayers, feed our friends, collect the money, sing to God, go and tell others, listen to God)

ASK: **What are some other things the church does?**

What is your favorite thing to do with the church?

Focus

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Save all visuals for reuse throughout the quarter.

Materials

roll paper, washable markers (or crayons), reusable adhesive



Materials

crackers, cups of water, Bibles, other family living center items



Serve gluten-free crackers.

Be sure to give children very specific tasks, modeling their task for them before they begin.

Materials

none



Focus

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

More! Bible Discovery (20–25 minutes)

2 Use all these activities to help children **tell what happened when the church prayed for Peter.**

Materials

Resources CD track 3,
CD player, two 1" x 8"
strips of paper, tape, Bible



Materials

Teaching Picture 11,
1" x 8" strips of paper,
tape



Teaching Tip

If you have a smaller class, one child can be Peter while other children are the church.

Materials

none



Materials

Resources CD track 6
and Unit 2 Bible Memory
Motions printable file, CD player,
Church-at-Work mural from
More! Getting Started, Bible



More! Sing and Pray

Before class, tape together the ends of two strips of paper to form a two-link paper chain.

Sing “Yes, I Will Go.”

PRAY: **Dear God, thank You for the church. We are so glad we are the church. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

Show the chain. SAY: **People sometimes have to wear chains on their wrists or ankles when they are in prison. People who make unwise choices and do wrong things that break the laws go to prison. Today’s Bible story is about one of Jesus’ followers who went to prison. But he didn’t do wrong things. He did right things. We can read his story in a New Testament book of the Bible called Acts, chapter 12.** Show the New Testament section of the Bible and then show Acts 12.

Bible Time—Another Way!

Before class, prepare two-link paper chains. Make enough to give to half of your class.

Divide the class into two groups. One group will be Peter. Give children in this group paper chains to put on their wrists. The other group will be the church. Read the Bible story on the back of the picture. Have the Peter group act out Peter’s actions and drop the chains from their wrists at the appropriate time in the story. Place the children in the church group across the room and instruct them to kneel and pray. Designate one child from that group to act as Rhoda.

SAY: **Peter was freed from prison because the church prayed. God heard their prayers and answered them. ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus too.**

More! Bible Review

Have kids remain in their groups. Ask the following questions. If the answer is “Peter,” the Peter group can stand. If the answer is “the church,” the church group can stand. The repetitive nature of the questions will emphasize today’s focus: ♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

ASK: **Who was in prison?** (Peter)

Who was praying? (the church)

Who did an angel come to? (Peter)

Who was praying? (the church)

Who knocked on the door of a house? (Peter)

Who was praying? (the church)

More! Bible Memory Acts 5:42

Before class, print and display the motions from the CD.

Have a child hold the Bible opened to Acts 5:42 as the class says the verse while doing the motions. Then play “They Continued to Tell.” As the children sing, let them stand by the Church-at-Work mural they created. Remind them that all the workers in the mural can tell people about Jesus and can pray for others who tell too.

More! Grow and Go (15–20 minutes)

3 Use one or more of these learning centers to help children **pray** for people who tell others about Jesus.

Focus

♥ We can pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Quick Step “Scout Sees the Church Praying”

Scout appears with a Bible. SAY: **Scout, you have a Bible. What are you doing?** Scout whispers to you. **Scout has met some people who use the Bible to tell about Jesus. These people came to his family’s house. Let me tell you what happened.**

Scout was sleeping (Scout pretends to sleep) **when people started ringing the doorbell. Ding-dong! Scout jumped up, barked, and ran to the door.** Scout barks excitedly. **The person at the door was the children’s teacher from church.**

Ding-dong! Scout barks excitedly again. **The next person to ring the doorbell was the church’s minister. He had a special guest with him too—a missionary. A missionary is a person who tells people about Jesus. Sometimes missionaries live in other countries. This missionary lived in Africa. He was visiting congregations in the United States and telling them what he does in Africa.**

The visitors ate dinner with Scout’s family. The food smelled so good. Scout sniffs around the floor. **Scout hoped he would be given some bites. During dinner, the visitors talked about how they tell about Jesus.**

After dinner Scout’s family prayed for the visitors (Scout sits quietly): **the teacher who tells their children about Jesus, the minister who tells their church about Jesus, and the missionary who tells people in far-away Africa about Jesus.**

ASK: **Who do you know who tells about Jesus?** Pray for the people the children mention.

Materials

Scout puppet, small Bible



Prayer Walk



Before taking your walk, give each child a copy of today’s *Heart Tugs*. Children can finish the dot-to-dot picture. Then talk about how they would complete the prayer printed on the page.

SAY: **Just as Jesus’ followers prayed for Peter, ♥ we can pray for people who tell about Jesus. Let’s take a walk and pray for people who tell about Jesus.**

Take a walk around the church building. Stop in the minister’s office and pray for him. Move to other places in the church building and repeat the process. Each time you stop, talk about the person who uses that area and describe how the person tells about Jesus. Visit a children’s minister’s office, a custodian’s closet, and a kitchen workstation.

ASK: **Who did we pray for who tells about Jesus?**
Who do you know who tells about Jesus?

Especially for 4s!

Say sentence prayers that children can repeat phrase by phrase.

Saying Good-bye

- While you wait for parents, sing again “Yes, We Are the Church.”
- Be sure children have projects made in class and this week’s *Heart Tugs*. Encourage parents to help their children pray for people who tell about Jesus.

Materials

Heart Tugs issue 11, colored pencils



Teaching Tip

Instead of taking children outside the classroom, take pictures of the different areas of your church building. Post the pictures around the room so children can still participate in a walk.

Cleanup

Sing “Cleanup Song,” found on the *Resources* CD Teacher Helps, as you encourage children to join you in cleaning the room.

