

Matthias Is Chosen

Grades
3-4

WITNESS • EASTER 7 • YEAR B

ACTS 1:15-17, 21-26



7

What is happening in this story?

It's incredibly important to the preaching recorded in Acts that those who proclaimed Christ in the first generation were themselves eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection. So important that when one apostle is being chosen to replace Judas, that apostle himself needs to be an eyewitness. This person can truly proclaim they saw Jesus both dead and alive. As a participant in Jesus' ministry, this person also has a firsthand understanding of its purpose and content. It is easier for the disciples to trust someone who knew Jesus with the task of carrying on his ministry.

Why does this story matter for kids?

This story speaks to kids about different ways we can cope with change. Maybe they have experienced a Sunday school teacher or coach moving to another job. It's important to trust God in transitions, just as the disciples trusted the Holy Spirit to guide them to choose a new disciple. They can also carry on the mission, just as the disciples did by choosing Matthias to carry on Jesus' ministry.

What is the lectionary connection?

After Easter we read how the early church began and how the disciples put together their early leadership team. In the Gospel text, we hear Christ's words of promise that those who lead the movement Jesus is starting are his chosen ones and are blessed by him.

AGE LEVEL TIP

The concept of lives that have an outward impact may be new to kids this age. Wherever you can, express the idea that we are an "observed" people. People look to see how or if we live as Christians in our daily lives. How we live matters!



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Pens
- Pencils

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Word search books
- Magnifying glass
- Easter costumes or props
- Sticky notes (2 in. x 2 in.)
- Bowl of water

WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL NRSV BIBLES • DVD • WALL CHART • LEAFLETS

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Put out some word search books and pens or pencils. Copies of individual reproducible search pages would make sharing easier!

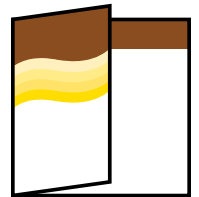
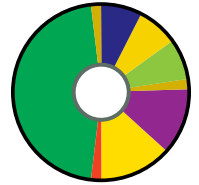
Invite kids to look at the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, church season, color, and icon. **Today is the seventh Sunday of the Easter season. So much has happened since Easter! Today we're going to take a deeper look at the opportunities Easter has provided to us as witnesses of Jesus' life.** Kids mark the chart by drawing a magnifying glass.

As kids dip their fingers into a bowl of water and gently touch their eyelids, say: **During Easter, we ask God to help us see new ways to be Jesus' witnesses.**

Pass out leaflets and markers.

What's the wildest thing you've ever seen? A bear making a sandwich? A dancing pony? When have you not believed your own eyes? Kids write or draw something they've seen that's hard to believe really happened.



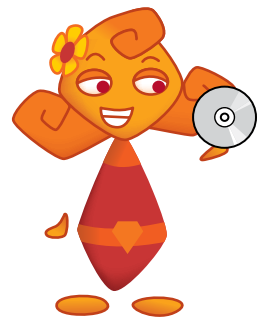
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

In today's video, a few of our friends are heading out for a camping trip. What are three things you'd want to take on a camping trip?

View Episode 13, "Miss Guided," on the Whirl Year B Spring Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Raise your hand if you've been camping! What did you like about it? What didn't you like?**
- **What choices did Mimi, Ruby, and Gabe face during their adventure?**
- **What made Eagle Eye seem like a good leader at first? What was good about Chet as a leader?**
- **How do you make your own decisions about who to follow in life?**
- **What can others trust you about?**



Pass out Whirl NRSV Bibles and help kids find Acts 1:15-17, 21-26.

Do the Easter 7 Preview Activity together on page 1274 and compare responses.

Read Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 in this creative way together: **We'll soon be moving out of the Easter season. Next week we'll celebrate the Day of Pentecost. The entire season of Easter has been filled with stories of the disciples' struggle to make sense of what is going on as they've coped with loss, confusion, and genuine fear for their own lives. The dust has settled a little; they've accepted that *they* are the leaders of this movement begun by Jesus. They're taking a hard look at who they are and who they need to be as witnesses for Jesus as they move forward.**



Have your group take turns reading the verses of today's passage, using a shared magnifying glass as they do so.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- When you're playing a game and have to choose another teammate, how do you decide who to choose?
- What kind of person did the apostles want to replace Judas?
- Reread verses 21 and 22. Why was it important to the apostles to choose someone who had been with them from the beginning?
- What makes a story believable to you? How do you decide if you think someone actually saw something happen?
- Without Jesus, what was the biggest challenge facing the apostles?

BIBLE BIT

After Jesus returned to God, his *disciple* followers became *apostle* leaders.

WATCH IT AGAIN

Gabe, Mimi, and Ruby were easily thrown off track by Eagle Eye. Look for clues that Chet was a good leader.

OUR CHURCH

How would you describe a recent event you have witnessed in your church community? How were kids involved? What church event can kids participate in next?

RESPOND 10

Open leaflets and pass out markers.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. **As the season is coming to a close, let's revisit the Easter story.**
2. Let the group assign characters and stage an impromptu reenactment of the Easter story, beginning with Jesus in the tomb. Offer costumes and props, if they are available. Don't worry about authentically reproducing every detail; it's actually better if they miss the mark a little and work together to re-create the story line. Let kids work on the story until it's helpful for you to offer input.
3. **On your square, identify the different parts of the story you just witnessed. Who was involved? What happened?** Help kids remember the story if they need it.
4. **How many things can you name that the disciples witnessed during the days before and after Easter?**
5. **Where have you witnessed God moving in your own life?**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Is there anything you noticed for the first time today? Take time to hear kids' responses. **The disciples (followers), now apostles (good news bearers), were suddenly thrust into explaining something that they'd witnessed, whether they'd been paying attention or not. How have you been paying attention to your journey with God so far?**

Return to the leaflet panels and pass out sticky notes and markers.

Read the questions on your leaflet. Write your answers on the sticky notes. Put the sticky notes over the ones on your square to take home.

Send kids out.

As kids dip their fingers into a bowl of water and gently touch their eyelids, say: **During Easter, we ask God to help us see new ways to be Jesus' witnesses.**

Pray together: **God, please help us to live our lives in a way that shows we know we are your witnesses. Amen.**

Thank kids for being willing to act out a story on the spot! Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.