



# THE CHURCH IS PEOPLE

Preschool-K • #NT24 • May 19, 2024

## Concept

The church is people.

## Goal

Children will learn that the church is made of people who have accepted Jesus' death as forgiveness for their sins. They will learn that as a part of the church, every person has a role to play.

## Passage

1 Corinthians 12

Key Verse: "For the body is not one part but many." 1 Corinthians 12:14

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p><b>Activity Station:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Strip of Velcro long enough to make large outline of a person on the floor</i></li><li>• <i>Ball</i></li></ul> <p><b>Introduction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexible, adhesive-backed magnet strip, 10"/class</li><li>• Paper person, cut into parts, from Activity Station</li></ul>	<p><b>Activity Station:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Butcher paper, 4'/class</li><li>• Crayons</li><li>• Scissors</li></ul> <p><b>Learning Activity #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Die-cut jumping jacks, 1/child</li><li>• Paper fasteners, 6/child</li><li>• Markers, crayons</li><li>• Eye stickers, 2/child</li><li>• Mouth stickers, 1/child</li><li>• Glue sticks</li><li>• <i>Yarn for hair</i></li></ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information/Teacher Helps

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This lesson teaches the value of the role of each member in the church of Jesus Christ. "All that Jesus Christ is (his fullness) is to be seen in his body which is the church. ...There is the holy mystery of the church—it is the dwelling place of God. He lives in his people. That is the great calling of the church—to make visible the invisible Christ."<sup>1</sup> The church is to act, literally, as Jesus' body on earth! In order for the church to fulfill these functions and Jesus' command to grow the church (Matthew 28:19, Acts 1:8), the members must be spiritually growing and active. There must be qualitative growth as well as quantitative growth.

Ephesians 4:15 and 16 state that "... we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love [*italics mine*]." Taken together, verses 11-16 make an important point: when each member of the body works properly, so does the church.

First Corinthians 12:12-27 teaches that the Spirit gives the gifts "for the common good," for the sake of others, not oneself (see 1 Corinthians 12:7). "As the human body must have diversity to work effectively as a whole, so the members of Christ's body have diverse gifts, the use of which can help bring about the accomplishment of Christ's united purpose. Each must properly exercise his gifts or effectively use his position for the good of the whole."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the students will be challenged to consider their contribution to others and the group as a whole as well as the importance of the contribution of all others in the body.

As you meditate on these points and prepare for the lesson, consider how to help the students learn to value other people, as well as how to be excited about what special part God has given each of them to play in God's Incredible Plan. Also, consider how to communicate that there is nothing more significant or fulfilling than playing a part in this plan. Are you aware that God has entrusted you with a role—a stewardship—to use for service to the Lord? What motivates or excites you about this knowledge?

<sup>1</sup>Ray Stedman, *Body Life*, Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1972, 1984, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> NIV Study Bible, 1985, Zondervan Publishing Co., footnote on 1 Corinthians 12:14, p. 1751.

## Set Up

### Incorporation Lg. Group

### Introduction Lg. Group

### Lesson Lg. Group

- **The week before class:** Pray for your team and the children.

#### Activity Stations:

- **Craft – Paper Person (also set-up for lesson)**
  - **Instructions:** Have one of the first children to arrive lie on the butcher paper. Make an outline around the child. Cut around the outline. While cutting around the outline, allow the children to work together to color details like a face, hands, feet, etc. Trace the outline of the person on the white board. Then cut the paper "person" apart, making sure there is a piece for each child. Cut the magnetic tape into enough pieces to put on the back of each piece. (For younger children, the teacher may have to add recognizable detail and allow the children to add color.)
- **Gross Motor – Ball**
  - **Instructions:** Use Velcro to trace a big body (like a giant gingerbread man) on the floor. Have the children sit on the Velcro outline. Roll the ball to a child and say the name of the child. Have that child roll the ball to another child and say the name of the child or have the child tell his/her name (or the teacher can say each child's name as the ball reaches him/her). After each child has had a chance to receive and roll the ball, have the children stand up and look at the outline. Ask them if they can tell what the shape is. Hopefully they will recognize that it is a person. When they sat on the outline each of them were each a part of the body of that person. You can take it farther with the older children by telling them that this person is a part of the church. That's because the church is people, not a building. The people in the church make up the "body" of Christ because Jesus is the head of the church.

**Instructions:** Hand each child a part of the paper person from the Activity Station as they come to sit down. As the children bring their pieces to you, put them on the white board to make a complete person.

Boys and girls, I need some help! My person here is kind of blank. He's missing a lot of things. Can you help me? Does someone have the head? What about his feet? (Continue to solicit pieces and affix them to your person until it's completed.)

Look at the parts of the body on the white board. Each arm, leg, eye, ear, toe, and finger is a part of <<child's name whose outline this is>> body. The Bible says that each of us are like the different parts of a body. That sounds silly, doesn't it? Is anyone here an arm or a leg or a toe, or how about a tongue or a tooth? No! But just as God made our arms, hands, legs, feet, ears to do special jobs to make our bodies work, He has given each of us special jobs to do in the church.

The church is also called the body of Christ because all the people are like the parts on this person and Jesus is like the head. Jesus knows everything, as does the head; He can tell us what is right and wrong, good and bad. Most people think the church is a building, but the Bible says the church is people who believe that Jesus died for their wrong choices (sins) and want Him to take their punishment so they can be friends with God. So if you've told Jesus you want His forgiveness, then YOU are a part of the body of Christ, the church.

Let's sing a song that will help us remember that the church is people.

**Instructions:** This song is sung to the tune of "Three Blind Mice."

*I am the church.*

*You are the church.*

*We are the church together.*

*All who follow Jesus, all around the world.*

*Yes, we're the church together.*

Let's try a rhyme.

**Instructions:** Knit your fingers together so they are tucked inside your palms. Point your index fingers up, finger tabs touching, and thumbs lined up side by side facing you. On the last verse, open your thumbs, or the doors, and see all the people... the other fingers.

*The church is not a steeple.*

*The church is not a building.*

*The church is not a resting place.*

*The church is the people.*

Since the church is people, let's think about how each person in the church is like a part of a body. What do your eyes do? (Point to the eyes of your white board person.) Right, they see. Can we use them to hear? No, we need the ears to hear. (Again, point to ears.) What do the hands do? (Point to the hands.) Yes, they can hold things and do work. They aren't the best way for us to walk around though, are they? No, we need our feet. (Point to feet.) In the same way that each part of our body is necessary, so each part of the church is necessary.

The Bible says that Jesus is the head of the body of Christ, the church and the church is people. He's the one who knows what we should do. Our bodies don't work without a brain, do they? Our brain tells our feet and arms and hands and eyes and ears what to do. Jesus is the brain of the body of Christ. He gives each member a special job to do to show the world what He is like. Some people are good teachers (kind of like the mouth). Some people are good at helping people (kind of like the hands). Others go to different parts of the world to tell people about Jesus (kind of like the feet). There are lots of jobs.

## Transition

### Learning Activity#1 Sm. Groups

Let's get into small groups to talk about this a little more.

The church is people and even children who have asked Jesus to forgive them have their own special part. You might tell your friend that he did something well. Or, you could be a good helper in your classroom or at home. You can tell your neighbor that Jesus loves her. Every person who is friends with Jesus is a part of His church. And as a part of His church we get to show the world that Jesus loves everyone!

- What are some ways you like to show other people that Jesus loves them? How about when you pray with your mom and dad and ask Jesus to help your friend get better? Is that a way you can be part of the church? Absolutely!
- Can you think of any other ways you can show that you are part of the church? Isn't that so exciting?!

Let's pray and thank Jesus that He died on the cross so we can be a part of His body, the church. Let's ask Him to help us learn to follow Him so we can do the job He has for us.

#### **Craft – Paper People**

**Instructions:** Give each child the 7 pieces to the person, 1 mouth sticker, 2 eye stickers and some pieces of yarn. Put mouth and eye stickers on the face and yarn on their head. Push the paper fasteners through the holes to connect the arms and legs to the body and spread apart in the back. Color the people. Tell the children that when they ask Jesus to forgive their sin and bad choices, they become a part of the church because the church is people. If this girl or boy has asked Jesus to forgive her or his sins, s/he is a part of Jesus' church.

If you would like to sing with me, you can come over here.

#### **Music – "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"**

**Instructions:** Remind the children that Jesus is the head and they can be the other parts of his body if they choose a relationship with Him. You might laugh together about being a big toe for Jesus, but then say how important it is that Christians walk or travel to take the good news about Jesus all around the world. Chant – "We Are the Church"

**Instructions:** Form a circle. Teach the children the words and hand motions as written below.

### Learning Activity#2 Lg. Group

## Transition

### Learning Activity#3 Lg. Group

**Learning  
Activity#3  
Continued**

**I am the church!** (point to self)

**You are the church!** (point to each other)

**We are the church together!** (turn to person beside you and shake hands)

**All who know Jesus,** (spread hand across in front of you from one side to the other)

**All around the world!** (circle arms over head)

**Yes, we're the church together!** (link arms together)

**The church is not a building!** (form rectangle over head)

**The church is not a steeple!** (form steeple over head)

**The church is not a resting place!** (fold hands and rest head on them)

**The church is only people!** (take hand of person on either side so all children are holding hands around the circle)

**We're many kinds of people, with many kinds of faces, all colors and all ages, too from, all times and places.**