



A New Disciple

Goal: To imagine what it means to be a church leader.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Acts 1:12-14, 21-26

After the death of Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:15-20), the disciples of Jesus had to find a replacement for Judas. They said the person must have “accompanied us during the whole time the Lord Jesus lived among us” (v. 21, CEB) and must have been “a witness to his resurrection” (v. 22, CEB). Two persons were nominated: Joseph called Barabbas (also called Justus) and Matthias. The disciples prayed and, by casting lots, they chose Matthias, who “was added to the eleven apostles” (v. 26, CEB).

Here we see it is important to have leaders in the church. In the early church, Jesus' disciples became leaders as the church developed. Matthias took his place with the other disciples in serving the church.

Today we also need leaders in the church. No matter who we are, God can use us to help others and provide leadership for the people of God. Leaders help others understand what God wants. They give love and care for others. They help others who are in need. They help others find ways to serve people around them.

We are thankful for God's grace in giving us leaders in the church. We are grateful, and we lead others in following God's way.

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

Children have a lot of role models for what it means to be a leader. They have experiences with teachers, coaches, family members, and church leaders. They see a lot and can share the qualities they see in people that they know. They also soak up what they hear and see in the culture with elected officials. This story offers a great chance to help them name the qualities that are most important for leaders who want to lead in the ways that Jesus taught.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

If you have been teaching the children in this group, then you have a good sense about who the leaders are, the children who have some natural abilities, and those who are the first to volunteer to help or to respond to a question. Pause and consider other children who might be quieter, ones you might not think of as leaders in the class. This story gives a great way to help each child know they can be a leader in the church. All it takes is being willing to share a gift they have.

*O God, give me new eyes to see the leaders among the children.
Help me inspire all of them to good, faithful leadership. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 13, 19

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

snack (optional)

Guided Play

choice 1: 11 objects, such as blocks, craft sticks, crayons, small toy cars, and so forth

choice 2: 12 raisins, goldfish crackers, or o-shaped cereal pieces per child

choice 3: stuffed animals and dolls

Exploring

choice 1: copies of **Grace Notes (GN) 1**, 8-ounce paper cups

choice 2: **SCM 13a**

choice 4: copies of **GN 2**

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner, and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker onto a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Provide raisins, goldfish crackers, or o-shaped cereal pieces for “Guided Play” choice 2.

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 1 requires more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet children as they arrive and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers whom you do not know. Tell the parents today’s story is about choosing a leader in the early church.

Invite the children to choose a guided play activity to start:

- 1. Counting to 11**—Make eleven circles on a piece of mural paper and place it on the table. Invite the children to place one item in each circle, counting to eleven. Tell them that they are going to hear a story about eleven of Jesus’ disciples. Clear the paper and let them count again. Variation: Gather eleven groups of eleven objects. Mix them into one pile. Invite the children to put a group of like objects, such as all crayons or all craft sticks, in a circle and fill all the circles. Count how many circles there are and how many objects are in each circle.
- 2. Adding to 12**—Give each child twelve raisins, goldfish crackers, or pieces of o-shaped cereal. Let the children arrange their items in groups, showing how many ways they can make twelve. (*Two groups of six, a group of five and a group of seven, and so forth*) After they are finished playing, let them eat their twelve items.
- 3. Choosing**—Put stuffed animals and dolls in an area. Invite the children to play. Engage them in conversation by asking them why they chose a certain toy or doll and inquiring what they like about that item.

T *Transition times can cause children to act out. Giving them something enjoyable to do provides them with a way to deal with these times.*



Transitioning to Story Time

Call the children to the story corner, playing and singing “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”—**SCM 19**. Repeat as appropriate.

Follow the Leader

T MS

As you walk, tap each child on the shoulder, inviting them to join in line, following as you go. Wander throughout the room and end in the story corner.

Follow Me

T L MS

Invite the children to repeat each line after you and follow your motions.

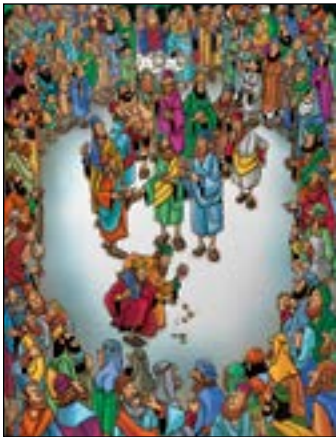
I am looking for God. (*cup hands around eyes*) /

I am following God. (*march in place*) /

I am learning to share. (*move both hands away from you with palms up*) /

I am being kind. (*hug a neighbor’s shoulder*) /

I am loving God. (*cross hands over chest*) /



Hearing the Story

F L LG A B

Open the Bible to Acts 1 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that they are going to hear a story about choosing a leader.

Read **SCM 13**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Reread the story. When you get to tossing the stones, form a circle and sing the words below to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.” Let the children circle slowly. Stand in the middle of the circle to choose someone to join you in the middle. While the group continues to circle, the newly chosen person chooses someone, repeating with each new person inviting another until all have been chosen.

Who will God choose next?

Who will God choose next?

Hi! Ho! We’re praying so,
you will be the one.

Finish the story, and end by singing together,

I will be the one!

I will be the one!

Hi! Ho! We’re praying so,
I will be the one!



EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE



1. Matthias Is Chosen FM

Before the session, make a cut, about an inch long, on the bottom of an 8-ounce paper cup for each child. Cut apart the pictures of Matthias using the solid lines from copies of GN 1.

Make a pop-up Matthias to remember the story of Matthias being chosen as a new disciple. Hand out the pictures of Matthias, and invite the children to color Matthias and the label. Tell them the person is Matthias. Ask them who Matthias was. Read the label aloud, "A new disciple is chosen." When the children have finished coloring, help them cut out the shapes using the dashed lines. Show them how to tape the Matthias figure to a craft stick and set it aside.

Give each child a paper cup, and invite them to glue the label to the cup. They may decorate their cups if they wish. Help the children push the craft stick down through the hole in the bottom of the cup with Matthias inside the cup. Show the children how to push Matthias up and say, "A new disciple is chosen!"

2. Choosing a Leader LG C

Explore qualities of leadership and practice choosing leaders. Show the children **SCM 13a** and talk about the different roles leaders have using the three pictures: a leader helps others, a leader reads the Bible, and a leader is a friend. Tell the children that they get to choose what they think is important for a leader.

Remind the children that the disciples needed a new leader and had to choose between Matthias and Justus. They both had good qualities to be a leader. The disciples prayed for God's help.

Invite the children to pray, repeating after you, "God help us choose a leader." Give each child a sticker, and invite them to take turns placing their sticker in the column of the quality of the leader they would choose. Encourage the children to talk about their choices. Affirm all responses. Wonder together why the children chose different qualities.

LG *Providing opportunities for children to make decisions about how they can lead, offer help, and express generosity helps build their confidence. This also helps them learn that they are gifted members of your community.*

Learning how to discern and make choices helps empower children and build their autonomy. All of these choices are good, so be careful not to discount choices with fewer votes. Practicing prayer as a part of discernment is practicing church language and action.



3. New Leader Game

F LG B MS

Play a game where everyone is chosen. Form two teams. Have each team stand in a line on opposite sides of the room. Explain to the children that they will take turns choosing new team members.

After a team decides on a new leader to call over, together they say, “New leader, new leader, (*Name*), you’re a keeper!” The child they call runs to their side and is greeted by high fives and thumbs-up greetings. Each team takes turns calling over a new leader.

Encourage the teams to select all the children throughout the course of the game. Since the teams continuously change members, all are winners!

4. Coloring Page

C

Hand out copies of **GN 2** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture. Engage the children in conversation as they color by using the following wondering questions.

- ▼ I wonder, “Why was Matthias a good choice?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What could Matthias do for Jesus?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What could Justus do for Jesus?”

T *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as twisting, waving hands, crawling like a crab, and so forth.*

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG FA

Call the children together, playing and singing “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”—**SCM 19**. Repeat words and phrases as appropriate.

Ask the children how they can be leaders in God’s church.

If you would like to share a snack, now would be a good time. Pray, inviting the children to repeat your words and actions:

For food to eat, (*raise hands to your mouth*) /
and friends to share, (*hold hands out*) /
for those we love everywhere, (*place hands over your heart*) /
we thank you, God. (*put hands together in prayer*) /

As the children leave, bless them, saying, “(*Name*), you are a disciple of Jesus. The grace of God is with you.”

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).



A new disciple is chosen!

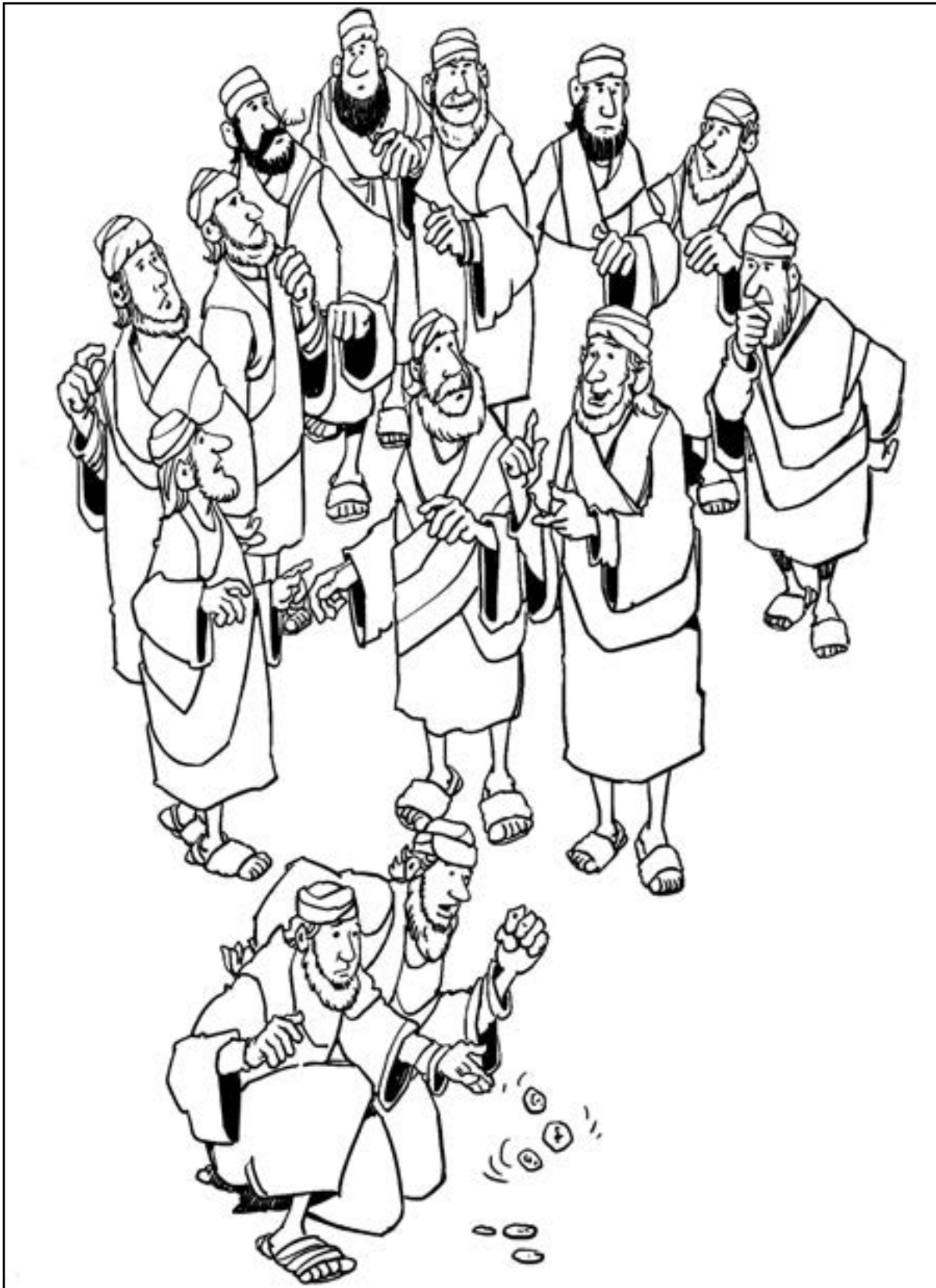


A new disciple is chosen!



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A New Disciple



The disciples prayed for a new leader.

