

# The Church Grows

## Bible Verse

He began to preach about Jesus in the synagogues. "He is God's son," he declared. (Acts 9:20)

## Did You Know?

**T**he apostle Paul was extremely influential in spreading the gospel. The last two thirds of the book of Acts tells of Paul's missionary journeys, and many of the books in the New Testament were written by Paul. As zealous as Paul was about spreading the good news of Jesus, remember that previously Paul had worked just as zealously to prevent the spread of the gospel. When he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus, Paul was on the way to arrest followers of Jesus.

With this background, it is not surprising that when Paul arrives in Jerusalem and tries to join the disciples, his welcome is less than friendly. The disciples remembered the old Paul and were reluctant to believe that a man who had wanted to kill them not long ago was now wanting to join them in spreading the gospel.

Fortunately for Paul, he had a friend who was willing to speak up for him. Barnabas had gotten to know Paul during his conversion experience and had witnessed firsthand how Paul had changed. Barnabas put in a good word for Paul. Because the disciples trusted Barnabas, they were willing to give Paul a chance.

Speaking up on behalf of someone else is not always easy. One runs the risk of being ostracized along with the one you are trying to protect. Good friends, however, have the courage to speak up on behalf of others. In Barnabas we have an example of how to be a good friend. Immediately after the story of Barnabas speaking up for Paul, we read in Acts that the church experienced a time of peace and growth. When we work together to tell people about Jesus, the church grows.



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## Bible Story

Acts 9:26-31

## Anchor Point

Go and tell about Jesus.

## Your Lesson

### JUMP IN:

- ☐ Welcome
- ☐ Barnabas
- ☐ Church Grows
- ☐ Just the Bible

### DIVE DEEPER:

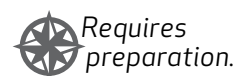
- ☐ Deep Blue Bible Adventure
- ☐ The Church Grows

### GROW STRONGER:

- ☐ What is Church?
- ☐ Learn & Serve with the Deep Blue Kids
- ☐ Preaching Dot-to-Dot

### WORSHIP:

- ☐ Prayer and Praise
- ☐ Bible Stories & Stuff





## JUMP IN!

*After welcoming the children, lead them into the Bible story with at least one of the following activities.*

### WELCOME

**Supplies: Class Stuff—pp. 2 & 31, Deep Blue Adventure DVD;** DVD player; offering basket

 Hang the Attendance Chart (Class Stuff—pp. 16–17, 31) at eye level.

- Play “Be a Believer” (CD-ROM), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings and ask them to record their attendance on the chart.

### BARNABAS

**Supplies: Kids Stuff—p. 17,** pens or pencils

- Hand out “Barnabas” (p. 17) and pens or pencils. Encourage each child to complete the puzzle.

### CHURCH GROWS




**Supplies: Kids Stuff—p. 18,** pens or pencils

- Hand out “Church Grows” (p. 18) and pens or pencils. Encourage each child to complete the puzzle.

### JUST THE BIBLE

**Supplies: Class Stuff—pp. 6 & 27, 21**

 Hang the “Unit 2 Bible Verse” and the “Unit 2 Bible Verse Signs” posters (pp. 6 & 27, 21).

- Read the verse together and teach the children the signs for the verse.
- Have the children sign and say the Bible Verse with you several times.

## DIVE DEEPER

### DEEP BLUE BIBLE ADVENTURE

**Supplies: Bible Stories and Stuff—“Songbook,” Adventure DVD,** DVD player, TV or projector and screen

- Hand out the “Songbook” (Bible Stories & Stuff). Using the songbook, invite the children to sing along with “Be a Believer” (Adventure DVD).

**SAY:** While Aurora shows the Deep Blue Kids her birch basket, Kat shares a story of the disciples changing their hearts toward Paul. Let’s see our video.

- Show the children the Adventure DVD for today’s session.

## THE CHURCH GROWS

**Supplies:** CEB Kids Bibles, Class Stuff—pp. 16 & 17

 Hang the “Go and Tell” collage (pp. 16 & 17).

**SAY:** Today we will read about the church growing in Acts 9:26-31. As we read the Scripture out loud, think about Paul. How do you think he felt? Let’s read together.

**ASK:** I wonder:

- How Paul felt when he arrived in Jerusalem?
- What the other disciples thought of Paul?
- How felt hearing about Paul?
- How God is working in this story?

## GROW STRONGER

### WHAT IS CHURCH?

**Supplies:** portable video cameras or cell phones with the video recording capability

**SAY:** Today our Scripture tells us that Paul taught and preached in Jerusalem and God strengthened the church.

**ASK:** What is church? What does church mean to you?

**SAY:** We are going to create a video telling people about church. The video needs to tell people what church means to you and why church is important.

- Invite children to create a video message about church.

### LEARN AND SERVE


**Supplies:** Bible Stories & Stuff—session 8,

- Hand out the Bible Stories & Stuff session 8.

**SAY:** Our Deep Blue Kids are learning so much about Alaska. They are also learning about the ministry there in Alaska. Our Bible Stories & Stuff has information about the mission. Let’s read it together and talk about the mission project.

### PREACHING DOT-TO-DOT

**Supplies:** Leader Guide—p. 53, pencils or pens

 Copy “Preaching Dot-to-Dot” (p. 53) for each child.

**SAY:** Paul preached to the people and told them about God’s love. He preached to all in Jerusalem, including the Greek-speaking Jews. This means he talked to people who did not know Jesus or what Jesus had done. Today we have a dot-to-dot. Connect all the numbers and see what Paul was doing in Jerusalem.



#### ≈ TIP ≈

Spend time talking about what should be in the video and how to organize the video before having the children begin the recording.



#### ≈ TIP ≈

There is a copy of the Mission Letter on page 54, if you should need to make copies.



# WORSHIP

## PRAYER AND PRAISE

**Supplies:** CEB Kids Bible, Adventure DVD, Bible Stories and Stuff—“Songbook,” DVD player, TV or projector and screen, table, fabric for covering table, candle, cross on the table, blank paper or cards, pens

- Sing together “Be a Believer” (Adventure DVD).

**SAY:** As we gather together for worship, let’s remember our anchor point today is “Go and tell about Jesus.” Our anchor point helps us to remember we need to tell the world about the Resurrection. While thinking about what it means to tell the world about Jesus, let’s light our candle for worship. (*Light the candle.*)

**SAY:** Paul preached to those who were in Jerusalem, even to those who did not know Jesus. He told them all about Jesus and God’s love.

**ASK:** If you had been in Jerusalem during that time, what do you think you would have heard?

- Invite children to write a letter sharing with a friend what you might have experienced.
- Help children imagine they are in the crowd listening to Paul. Encourage them to write to a friend telling them what is happening.

**ASK:** Are there any prayer requests for today?

**PRAY:** Gracious God, thank you for Paul preaching about your love. Bless our letters that they will help us to go into the world and tell others about you. Amen.

**SAY:** Remember to take home your Bible Stories & Stuff for session 8.



### **TIP**

Do you have children waiting at the end of class? Check out the Deep Blue app at the QR code below.




# Preaching Dot-to-Dot



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# Mission Letter



ALASKA

Willow Church and Community Ministry

Dear Parents or Guardians,

The Deep Blue Kids arrived in Alaska! They floated into the harbor where they met Aurora, and she is excited to show the crew around her hometown and teach them about her Native culture.

During our time focused on Alaska, we will learn about the ministry projects Willow Church and Community Ministry are involved in. In Willow, AK, the cost of food is 31% above the national average, so the church began a food pantry. They are the only food pantry in the area; sometimes people travel up to 50 miles to get food from the pantry.

Willow Church and Community Ministry also began a community garden project, and they provide seeds and starter trays for people in their community to use in their gardens. The church also provides vouchers to the food pantry clients that they can use to purchase fresh produce at the local farmer's market.


Over the next several weeks, your family will have an opportunity to support these great projects. You can donate online, send a check, or send a donation with your child to contribute to her or his Sunday school offering.

Donations can be made online by credit card at: <http://www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Projects/931520>.

To donate by check, please make your check payable to Advance GCFA, with the Advance number on the memo line, and mail to:

Advance GCFA #931520  
PO Box 9068 GPO  
New York, NY 10087-9068

To donate by phone, please call 1-888-252-6174.



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