

CROSS EXPLORATIONS®: THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS THE APOSTLES		
LESSON	TITLE/SCRIPTURE	KEY POINT
1	God Sends the Holy Spirit Acts 2:1–21	At Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church. Through Word and Sacrament, God gives us His Holy Spirit to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus.
2	Peter and John Heal the Lame Man Acts 3	We are all lame beggars before God. Through the Means of Grace—God’s Word and Sacraments—God gives us faith to believe in Jesus as our Savior and grants us forgiveness, the cure for all sin.
3	God’s Servant Stephen Acts 6–7	We are crushed and enraged at the accusations of God’s Law, but the Gospel brings peace and quietness. In church, the pastor speaks the same Word of God as Stephen speaks in Acts 7:60, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them,” and gives us peace through the Words of the Absolution, “for His sake [God] forgives you all your sins.”
4	Philip and the Ethiopian Acts 8:26–40	As He came to the Ethiopian, our Lord comes to us in our weakness, for we cannot by our own reason or strength come to Him. Through the Means of Grace, the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies us, keeping us with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.
5	The Conversion of Paul Acts 9:1–31	Through the Law, we are crushed by the weight of our sin, and like Paul, we are enemies of God, unable to save ourselves. As God revived Paul through Ananias, He revives us through the proclamation of His Word and the administration of His Sacraments, granting forgiveness, life, and salvation to all who believe.
6	Dorcas Acts 9:36–43	In the life of Dorcas, we see that God leads us to do good works that glorify Him and point others to the saving light of Christ!
7	Peter and Cornelius Acts 10	In church, we receive the Good News that, although we are judged unrighteous and deserving of death, God mercifully declares us holy, righteous, and innocent because of Christ and His work.
8	Peter’s Escape from Prison Acts 12	Like Peter, we may suffer because of the sins of others, but God’s will is always done. His Word is never proclaimed in vain, but breaks the chains of sin that bind people and sets them free.
9	Paul’s First Missionary Journey Acts 13–14	Just as God sent Paul and Barnabas to spread the Gospel, so today He sends pastors and missionaries to preach the Gospel, baptize, and administer the Lord’s Supper in mission fields around the world.
10	Paul and Timothy Acts 15:1–16:5	Human reason believes, as many did in Paul’s day, that we must do something to be saved. Yet the answer is always Jesus, Jesus, only Jesus, whose resurrection from the dead sealed our salvation and absolved the world.
11	Lydia Acts 16:11–15	Just as God worked His miracle beside the river, clothing Lydia with Christ in Baptism, so God works His miracles in pulpits and fonts around the world, destroying the work of Satan by washing away sins in water combined with God’s Word and clothing believers with His righteousness.
12	Paul and Silas in Prison Acts 16:16–40	Just as God opened the prison, granting Paul and Silas freedom and new life, so Christ by His crucifixion and resurrection frees us from the prison of our sins and grants us life eternal.
13	Paul Sails for Rome Acts 27	As Christ was with Paul and his companions in a perilous sea voyage, so He is with us, holding us up, keeping us with Him in the ship of the Church, and casting all our sins into the depths of the sea.



ISBN 978-0-7586-5437-3



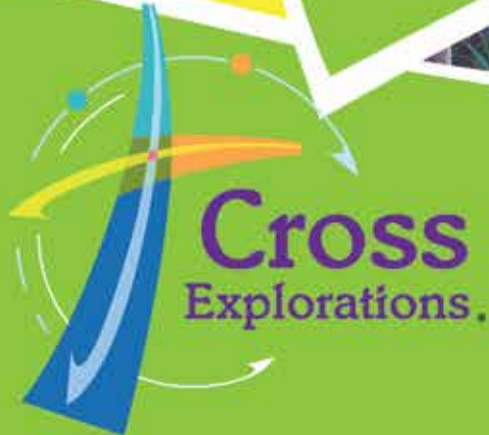
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Level
1

The Holy Spirit
Leads the Apostles
NEW TESTAMENT 5

EXPLORE



Teacher Leaflets
Grades 1–3

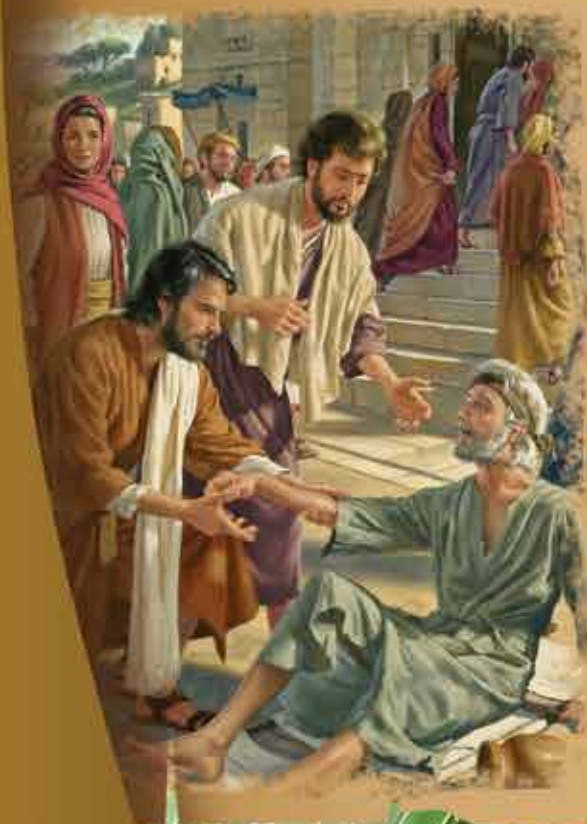
Faith Words

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Preparing the Lesson

God Sends the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1–21

Date of Use _____



The coming of the Holy Spirit reverses God's judgment at Babel. While people around the world may still speak different languages, the Holy Spirit unites them in the Gospel—that is, the preaching of Christ crucified and risen.

In John 14:23–31, Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to His disciples as He gets ready to suffer, die, rise again, and then leave them. Jesus talks about demonstrating our love for Him by keeping His Word (John 14:23). He promises the Holy Spirit, “whom the Father will send in My name” (John 14:26). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all work together as one to give comfort and peace in the message of the Gospel (John 14:27).

When Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit, He explains the Holy Spirit's “job description” as well: “He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26). Jesus also said, “[The Holy Spirit] will bear witness about Me” (John 15:26), and “[The Holy Spirit] will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you” (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit comes not through uncertain dreams, visions, or feelings, but through the certain and comforting message of peace and forgiveness of sins won by Jesus Christ.

Key Point

At Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church. Through Word and Sacrament, God gives us His Holy Spirit to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus.

Law/Gospel

I sin when I believe that I can understand and trust in God on my own. **By the power and work of the Holy Spirit through His Word, the Spirit grants me faith in Jesus and empowers me to will and do that which is good and God pleasing.**

Context

Pentecost, which means “fiftieth,” occurred fifty days after Jesus' glorious resurrection on Easter. Forty days after He rose again, Jesus ascended to God's right hand, and now, ten days later, He fulfills His promise to send the Holy Spirit, who will “bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26).

Commentary

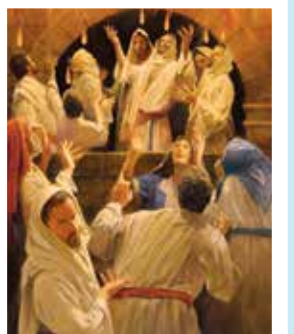
In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit introduces Himself in “a mighty rushing wind” (v. 2) and “divided tongues as of fire” (v. 3). However, Acts 2:11 reveals the great miracle of Pentecost. Those who hear the apostles say, “We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Peter stands and proclaims God's mighty works of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Peter cites Joel 2:28–32 as his sermon text, and then he proclaims that Joel's prophecy is fulfilled on Pentecost. Peter's sermon draws our attention to Jesus Christ and His suffering, dying, and rising. The Holy Spirit comes to us and works through the preaching of Christ and Him crucified and risen for the forgiveness of our sins.

The coming of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Gospel also reverse the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1–9). In Genesis 11, the people of the world had one language, but they arrogantly sought to make a name for themselves (Genesis 11:4). As a consequence, God confused their language and dispersed them (Genesis 11:7–8).

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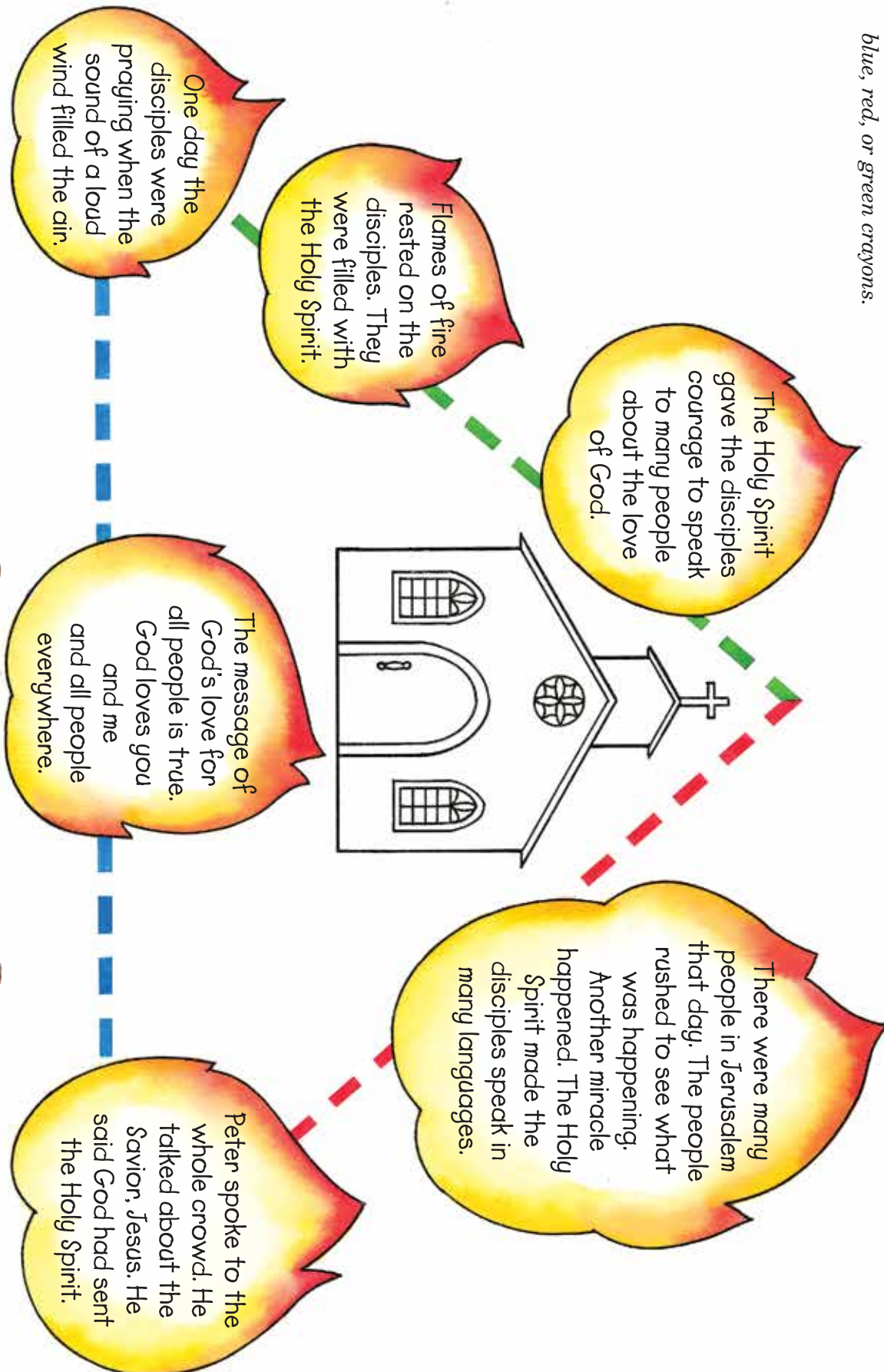
To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit cph.org/podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.



Painting by Robert Hunt © CPH

Follow the story from flame to flame. Connect the dotted lines with blue, red, or green crayons.

Review



Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Matthew 28:19

Get Ready to Teach

Read the story from the Bible and “Preparing the Lesson” on page 1 of this leaflet.

Put up the Faith Words Poster (the poster inside the Teacher Leaflet cover).

Mark the boxes and ideas from pages 2 and 3 that will work best for you.

Look at the review activity on page 4.

Decide how you will teach the Bible Memory Verse.

Bible Memory Verse

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.
Matthew 28:19

Start

Welcome the children as they arrive.

Do

- ☐ Give the children the Explore Student Leaflets. Students write their names at the bottom of the first page.
- ☐ Introduce the Bible story with the discussion starter at the bottom of page 1. Find out what the children already know about the Holy Spirit.

Say

I wonder what you already know about the Holy Spirit.

On the board, write down any facts the children give. Correct any misunderstandings.

- ☐ Introduce the Faith Words by adding the words *Holy Spirit* to the poster.

Say

In today’s Bible story, we will hear the story of Pentecost. At that time, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church.

Remind the children that Pentecost happened fifty days after Easter. Review the account of Jesus’ ascension into heaven: before Jesus ascends into heaven, He tells His disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- ☐ Look at the story picture on page 1 of the Student Leaflet. Review the characters and the setting.

Read

The True Story

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples returned to Jerusalem. Jesus had told them to wait there for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

At that time, people from many places had gathered in Jerusalem for a celebration. The disciples were in a room praying. Suddenly, the sound of a loud wind filled the air.

Make the sound of rushing wind.

Flames rested on the disciples’ heads.*

Wiggle fingers over head to make flames.

The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gave them courage to speak to many people about the love of God.*

Touch mouth and then heart.

There were many people in Jerusalem that day. They heard the sound of the wind. The people rushed to the house to see what was happening. The people saw the flames on the disciples’ heads.

Touch ears and then eyes.

There were more miracles. The Holy Spirit made the disciples able to talk in all the languages of all the people gathered. They heard about the mighty works of God in their own languages.*

Touch mouth and then ears.

Peter spoke to the whole crowd. He talked about the sins of the people.

Sweep arm from left to right.

He talked about the Savior, Jesus. He said Jesus had died on the cross and had come alive again at Easter.

Make finger cross. Then lift up hands.

He said that God sent the Holy Spirit to bring the gift of faith. The people were amazed.

Look

- ☐ Once again, look at the pictures and read the information.

Find

- ☐ Have students who are Bible readers look up the Bible verses. Students can work together.

Acts 2:2

From where did the sound of the rushing wind come?

It came suddenly from heaven.

Acts 2:3

What happened next?

Tongues of fire rested on the disciples.

Acts 2:4

What happened after that?

Those people were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues (languages).

Share

- ☐ Talk to the children about the family activities on page 3 of the Student Leaflet.
- ☐ Review the lesson with the activity found on the back of the Student Leaflet.

Directions

Follow the story from flame to flame, starting in the lower left corner. Connect the dotted lines with blue, red, or green crayons

Answers

Help the children to follow the story. Note the triangle shape. Talk about the triangle as a symbol for the Trinity.

- ☐ Talk about the Lily’s Day cartoon. Lily and Sprout are celebrating the birthday of the Church. How does your church celebrate? Do you use red on the altar?
- ☐ Teach the Bible Memory Verse, using the cues on Lesson Leaflet page 4. The children can also make up actions to help them memorize the Bible Words.
- ☐ Reflect on today’s exploration. Pray that God will bless the children through His Word.

Preparing the Lesson

Peter and John Heal the Lame Man

Acts 3

Date of Use _____



Key Point

We are all lame beggars before God. Through the Means of Grace—God’s Word and Sacraments—God gives us faith to believe in Jesus as our Savior and grants us forgiveness, the cure for all sin.

Law/Gospel

Disability and illness are physical symptoms of sin in the world. **Through His Son, God gives me forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation—the cure for all sin.**

Context

In the days following Christ’s ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the disciples remained in Jerusalem, making daily visits to the temple for prayer and to share the message of Christ with those who were there.

Commentary

As Peter and John were going to the temple, they encountered a lame man begging for alms at the gate of the temple. Alms are money or food for the poor; more generally, however, alms are acts of mercy. The lame man, therefore, though he had in mind money or food, was asking in a general way for an act of mercy.

When Peter and John heard this man’s cry for mercy, they responded with the only mercy worth giving, the only mercy they had. They gave him the power of God unto salvation. They preached Christ and Him crucified.

Thus, just as the paralytic was healed so that we may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins (Matthew 9:1–7), likewise this lame beggar was healed, receiving from Peter and John God’s own gift: mercy.

The church is a mercy place. It inhales God’s mercy in Christ’s death and resurrection through Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, the Lord’s Supper, and even the sermon. It exhales that selfsame mercy in love and service to one’s neighbor.

Before God, we are all lame beggars. On account of sin, our plea before God cannot be for justice, equity, or fair treatment by the Law. To ask for that is simply to ask for hell.

Our plea, like that of the lame man, is a cry for mercy. Our plea is a cry for undeserved love on account of Christ’s death and resurrection. Through the Means of Grace—through God’s Word preached and His Sacraments administered—we receive God’s mercy. Through those means, God bestows on us what Christ accomplished on the cross two thousand years ago—the forgiveness of our sin. “For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation” (Small Catechism, Sacrament of the Altar). On account of this, we are once again able to stand before God.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit cph.org/ podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.



Painting by Greg Copeland © CPH

Review

Draw a line to match what happened before and after. The nouns are on the left, and the verbs (their action) are on the right.

lame man

living



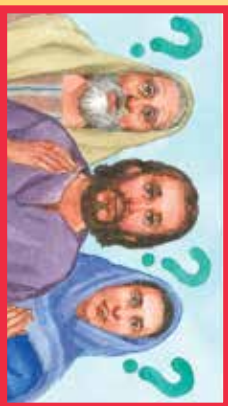
Peter and John

listening



crowds in Jerusalem

healing



Redeemer

praising



Bonus: What name heals us from our sin? _____



There is no other name . . . by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12



Get Ready to Teach

To prepare, read the Bible story and page 1 of this Teacher Leaflet.

Put up the Faith Words Poster (the poster inside the Teacher Leaflet cover).

Choose activities from pages 2 and 3 that work best for you. Look at the review on page 4.

Bible Memory Verse

There is no other name . . . by which we must be saved.
Acts 4:12

Start

Welcome the children as they arrive.

Ask

Have you heard words such as *abracadabra*, *hocus-pocus*, or *presto-chango*? Sometimes, magicians use these words when they do tricks. They pretend they have power through those words.

Say

Today's Faith Word really does have power. It is a word that saves. Do you know what word it could be? *Jesus* Yes, it is the name of Jesus. Let's read the Bible account and hear more about Jesus' power to save.

Write the word on the Faith Words Poster.

Do

- ☐ Give the children the Student Leaflets. Tell them to write their names at the bottom of page 1. Discuss the "I wonder" statement.
- ☐ Look at the story picture on page 1. Identify the characters and the setting.
- ☐ Read The True Story. Invite your students to imitate the words written in red.

Read

The True Story

One day, two of Jesus' disciples, Peter and John, were **walking** to the temple to pray. A man who **couldn't walk** sat by the temple gates. He was **begging** for money.*

Peter said to the man, "I don't have any money to give you, but I can give you something only God can give you. I tell you, in the name of Jesus, get up and walk." *

Then Peter **took the man's hand and helped him up**. The man got up and **began to leap and run and praise God**. He was so happy that God had made him well again. Right away, he **went** to the temple to praise God and to **tell** Him "Thank You." *

The people in the temple **were astonished** and **came running** to Peter and John. Peter explained that he and John did not make the man walk with their own power. They said it was the power of the same Jesus whom they had killed, but whom God had raised from the dead. Peter told the people to repent and turn to God so that God could wipe away their sins. That day, many who heard the message believed and were baptized.

The man who could now walk **praised God** for healing him. We, too, praise God for all the good things He does for us, especially for healing us from our sins.

Look

- ☐ Review the Bible story, using the pictures in the Look column as a guide.

Find

- ☐ Have students work together to read the Bible verses and to answer the questions.

Acts 3:3–8

What gifts did the lame man expect to get? What did he get instead?

The lame man expected to get money or some other help. Instead, he was healed by the power of Jesus' name. He was able to walk.

Acts 3:19–21

What did Peter tell the people to do?

He told them to repent so their sins could be forgiven and they could be refreshed by the Lord.

Share

Do

- ☐ Talk about the at-home activities on page 3 of the Student Leaflet. Read the Lily's Day cartoon. Poor Lily is sick. Whom can God use to comfort her?
- ☐ Review the lesson with the activity on the back of the Student Leaflet.

Directions

Draw a line to match what happened before and after. The nouns are on the left, and the verbs (their actions) are on the right.

Answers:

**The lame man was praising.
Peter and John were healing.
The crowds in Jerusalem were listening.
The Redeemer is living.
The answer to the bonus question is Jesus Christ.**

- ☐ Teach the Bible Memory Verse, using the cues at the bottom of the Review page. Invite students to hop on one foot and repeat the Bible Memory Verse.
- ☐ Take time to reflect on today's lesson. What were today's joys?