

# Early Believers Share

Grades  
**5-6**

## SHARING • EASTER 2 • YEAR B

ACTS 4:32-35



### What is happening in this story?

The book of Acts tells the story of what happened after Easter: Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, and the apostles were sent out all over the world healing and preaching. In Acts 4, we learn how the larger group of believers was enjoying life together. They shared everything, and no one claimed private ownership of anything. Nobody was in need. All were cared for.

### Why does this story matter for kids?

Kids are learning how to share, so they know it is important and they know it is sometimes hard to do. When first read, this story seems to present a pretty radical community. However, sharing public property, books, toys, and car rides are all things kids can relate to. Some kids know what it is to live in want, while some kids live not knowing what is enough. These few verses address both perspectives. We share by God's grace. In God's vision for our world, everyone has enough and no one is in need.

### What is the lectionary connection?

These few verses in Acts are read in conjunction with the Gospel of John's account of the Holy Spirit's arrival, when the risen Jesus comes to the disciples in a locked room. He breathes the Spirit upon them and the implication is that they are sent out, fortified in spirit. In Acts, we see the followers of Jesus already fortified—they're doing the work! The Holy Spirit shapes and fortifies relationships for the explicit purpose of getting the story out into the world.

### AGE LEVEL TIP

Kids this age are often steeped in the materialism of Western culture, so this lesson might come as a shock. The goal is not to make them feel guilty for having material possessions, but rather to help them see how "holding things in common" can free them to care for others.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Clear tape

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Penny
- Small zip-top bags
- Jelly beans
- Mural paper or whiteboard

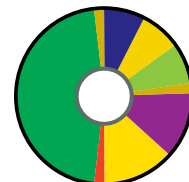
## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Hang two pieces of mural paper on the wall. With a marker, label one “Things that are easy to share,” and label the other “Things that are hard to share.” Ask kids to add their ideas to the pages, using markers.

## Invite kids to look at the Wall Chart.

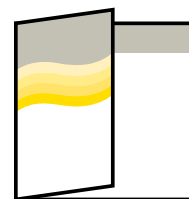
Point out today’s date, church season, color, and icon. **Happy Easter! Even though Easter Sunday was last week, we’re in the Easter season all the way to Pentecost** (point at Pentecost on the Wall Chart), **so saying “Happy Easter” is still appropriate. Between Easter and Pentecost, things move quickly in the life of the church; it’s a time to celebrate Jesus’ victory over death, when we see people starting to apply Jesus’ teachings to a growing group of followers. Today we explore how some early disciples pooled their resources to take care of everyone. Let’s tape a penny to the Wall Chart as a symbol of sharing our resources.**

While you stand around the Wall Chart say, **“Christ is risen!”** Have the kids respond, **“Christ is risen indeed. Let’s share the good news!”** Repeat it a few times, with feeling.



## Pass out leaflets and colored pencils, crayons, or markers.

Draw a detailed map of your living room at home. Be as accurate as you can, including as much detail and as many items as you can remember. When you’re finished, use a marker to draw a circle around the things in the room that belong to you. Use a different color marker to draw a rectangle around the things that belong to your family. Are there more circles or squares on your map? What do you think that says about your family?

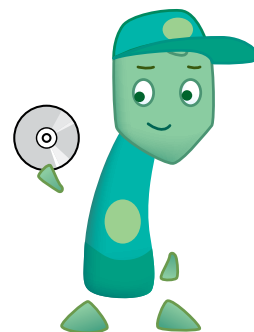


## Gather kids around the screen where you’ll watch the video.

View Episode 8, “The Carpool,” on the Whirl Year B Spring Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- What word would you use to sum up Gabe’s attitude in the beginning of the video?
- How has Gabe’s attitude changed by the end of the video? What causes this change?
- When have you acted like Gabe?
- Would you be willing to put yourself in an uncomfortable situation in order to help other people?
- What does a carpool have to do with sharing? What other things can you think of that make life a little better when they’re shared?



## Pass out Whirl NRSV Bibles and help kids find Acts 4:32-35.

Do the Easter 2 Preview Activity together on page 1279 and compare responses.

**This short passage describes one way that the early believers took care of each other: by sharing what they had and holding everything “in common.”**

Read Acts 4:32-35 in this creative way together: Select a single person to begin the reading, and divide the rest of the class into three groups. After each verse is read, have another group join in so that by the end, everyone has added their voice to the reading.



## Ask these questions after you read the story:

- What does it mean to you when you hear that the whole group was “of one heart and soul”?
- If people sold their homes and property, where do you think they lived?
- How did money and belongings get distributed?
- What would have to happen for you to give up something you owned in order to benefit someone else?
- Think about how your family works. In what ways were the early believers like a family?

### BIBLE BIT

- This is just one of many biblical examples of how God’s grace covers those who believe. Other examples include Exodus 16; Matthew 14:13-18; and Matthew 6:19-34.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

- Pay attention to the things Gabe remembers from his childhood flashbacks. How was Little Gabe’s life different from Big Gabe’s life?

### OUR CHURCH

- Look around the classroom. What things in this room do we “hold in common”?
- What about in other areas of the church? How do these shared things help us serve or worship God?

**TODAY’S READINGS** Acts 4:32-35 • 1 John 1:1–2:2 • John 20:19-31

# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. Divide kids into three groups: roughly 15% in one group, 25% in a second, and 60% in a third. Divide jelly beans into baggies for each group. Each person in the first group receives eleven jelly beans, each in the second receives one jelly bean, and one of every four people in the third receives one jelly bean.
2. Separate groups and distribute candy. **This is a global hunger simulation, scaled down to our class size. The jelly beans represent the survival resources available to the world's population.**
3. **This large group is about 60% of the class, and they have only about 2% of the jelly beans in the room. The medium group represents about 25% of the class, and they have about 25% of the jelly beans. This small group, about 15% of the class, has a whopping 90% of the jelly beans.**
4. Ask members of each group how they feel about the resources they have at their disposal. **Is this fair?**
5. **What countries might fall where?** Tell the kids: **Worldwide, 15% of the people have 90% of the resources like in the USA, Canada, and the European Union. Twenty-five percent have only 25% of the resources, like countries in Eastern Europe, Thailand, and the Philippines. And 60% of the people have 2% of the resources, like Ethiopia and Haiti.**
6. **How does this compare with what we read in Acts 4:32-35?** Have kids complete hunger quiz.

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Imagine if our world looked more like the church in Acts. Here's a true story: A man in the city of Hail in Saudi Arabia put a refrigerator outside his home and placed leftover food inside for hungry people to take as they needed it. The idea gained momentum, and other people started to put their leftovers inside too. **Are there needs like this we can meet?** Take time to hear kids' responses.

## Return to the leaflet panels.

Choose a need we've listed and think of ways it could be met. **Don't be limited by what you can do alone.**

## Send kids out.

Circle kids together and remind them that the Easter season has only just begun! Say together, **"Christ is risen! Let us share the good news!"**

Pray together: **God, give us the strength to do our part and share what we have to help others. Amen.**

Thank kids for their generous spirits. Share what's left of the jelly beans and remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.