

Matthias the Apostle – Middle to Older Elementary

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

May 12, 2024

GATHER

Before class, write out the following “jobs” on separate pieces of paper. Give one to each kid when they arrive in the classroom. Have them complete their assigned job!

- *Chair arranger.*
- *Attendance taker*
- *Warm – up comedian*
- *High five welcomer*
- *Interpretive dancer*
- *Snack passer outer.*
- *Napkin distributer*
- *Supply helper.*
- *Timekeeper*

Ask: Which job in the opening activity was the best one to have? Could we have done without any of the jobs?

What kinds of jobs do we have at our church? Whom do you think has the most important job at our church? (Encourage kids to think beyond the obvious – the custodian is important to making things happen too!). Who has the most powerful position at our church? **Say:** Some of these jobs people were hired to do and other jobs are run by volunteers. All these jobs are important in the life of our church to keep things running.

Today we’re going to learn about a new disciple of Jesus. This person was chosen by the others to be one of the 12 apostles (disciples). This topic today gives us a chance to learn something new about each other. Find someone wearing the same color as you and you have 1 minute to; discover something you didn’t know about them (maybe a pet, a hobby, place they’ve visited, etc.). Also, find out something they are thankful for this week. *Reverse the process after 1 minute to allow the other person to share.*

Say: You might not know that God has many names in the Bible. Here is a list of a few of the names people have called God. (*Names will be written out on chart paper for the kids to see*). For the opening prayer, we’ll go around the room and everyone can add what they are thankful for using one of these names for God. Every time one gets used; we’ll cross it off the sheet. The next person should use a different name for God in their prayer. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

(Example of how this might work. The first person says: Emmanuel, I am thankful for my teacher helping me this week. The second person says: Fountain, I am thankful for my new puppy, etc.)

Once the group has finished, you all say, “Amen.”

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Open the Bible

As I mentioned earlier, we're going to learn about a new disciple today. Huh? Didn't we already have 12 disciples? One of them is no longer part of the group. Let's review and see if we can name the 12 disciples (Have the kids use the "Dozen Disciples" to remember the names of the original twelve. If needed help them identify the person that is no longer part of the group – Judas).

Ask for volunteers to read Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Brief video explaining more about [Saint Matthias](#)

[Gospel Project](#) (direct bible story if needed)

Say: We're reminded by this story that God knows everyone's hearts. Maybe the disciples in today's story trusted God to work with either of the two men. God helped them make the choice. but I'm sure the other man, Barsabbas, continued to faithfully serve Jesus. S

Ask: Was Barsabbas' life over because he didn't get picked as the next disciple? When we aren't picked for something, how do we move on?

Say: In the end, maybe places don't matter. What matters is that God names us, call us by name and uses us in the world!

Activate Faith

The group present at church will be working on a special art project gift for Pastor Todd. If there is time, they will do one of the following activities as well. The activity chosen will depend on your group. Pick whichever activity or activities work for your situation.

1. The Name Game - Activity

Supplies: *Small pieces of scrap paper and pencils. .*

Say: Think about a name that only one or two people in your life use when talking about you (Keep the identity of that person a secret!). For example, Andrew's Dad may call him Drew, his sister may call him MacBean, and his grandma may call him Sweetie.

Write down a nickname or two on the piece of paper. I will collect them, and we'll see if the rest of the group can guess who the name refers to.

Ask:

1. Is the nickname you picked special for you? Do you ever get embarrassed by a name that's used for you? How can names touch our emotions?
2. Can anyone share the reason they have the name they do? Are you named after someone? Did your name have special meaning for your parents?
3. If you could pick a new name, what would it be?

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Say: Barsabbas in today's story has three names. We don't really know why that was important since he wasn't mentioned again. Jesus gave some of his disciples' new names when they became his disciple.

Remember, God knows our hearts, and that's good news. Even if we changed our names, God would still call us to God's work. Not because of the face we put on for the world, but for who God made us to be!

2. Blind Trust – Game/Activity

Kids learn about trust by helping their blindfolded classmates navigate an obstacle course: "I am the right one for the job."

Supplies: Blindfolds, cones from the coat closet or other objects to use as materials for a simple obstacle course.

Instructions:

Say: Today, we learned about Matthias the apostle Matthias became one of the twelve apostles after Jesus died. After Judas was gone, the disciples had a big decision to make. Even though Matthias was the right one for the job, it was hard to trust he was the right guy. Let's play an obstacle course game that's all about trust.

1. *Show kids the obstacle course.*
2. *Then have the kids pair up, then explain that they will take turns giving directions and completing the obstacle course.*
3. *Help your kids work on their communication and listening skills as they navigate the obstacle course.*

Great job, everyone! I hope you learned a little bit about trust. You can be sure Matthias had to trust God before he could say, "I am the right one for the job."

3. Clean Slate - Activity

Kids learn about trust as they remember that God calls (*your name here*).

Supplies: Bowl of water, classroom chalk, rocks with flat surfaces.

Instructions:

Say: After Judas died, the disciples needed a new follower to complete the twelve. Does anyone remember what the disciples did after they narrowed it down to Matthias and Barsabbas? *Allow kids to respond.* They prayed and trusted God. We can bet that Matthias might have had a little trouble trusting God when the disciples chose him—Matthias probably thought he was just another ordinary guy! What Matthias needed to know was that God calls everyone, no matter who they are or what they've done.

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1. *Give each kid a rock and a piece of chalk.*
2. *Invite kids to think about something about them that makes them feel like they might not be a perfect disciple.*
3. *When kids are finished writing, have them place their rocks in the pool of water and watch as the words disappear.*

Say: Look at these rocks—they're all clean! God calls everyone because everyone can be a disciple. God calls (your name here).

If you have less time...Let the kids rub the chalk off their stones instead of washing them in water.