**Sunday School from Home**

**August 2, 2020**

This week we learn about Lydia, the Gentile Greek businesswoman who was baptized by Paul after hearing him teach about Jesus. She then welcomed Paul and the other disciples into her home. We meet Lydia in Acts 16:11-15.

* Read the story about Lydia in your Bible or online. Note that Lydia was an extraordinary woman of her time because she owned her own business and home. She was also quite wealthy, and sold purple cloth, which was a color only the very rich and powerful could afford.
* Have you ever noticed the different colored cloth drapes on the cross at church during Lent and Easter? On Palm Sunday we often have a purple drape because this is the day in the church year that we remember Jesus riding into Jerusalem and the crowds treating him like royalty. We also call Jesus the King of Kings – and as royalty it is appropriate for him to wear purple.
* What made purple dye to special and valuable? Do some online research to find out. Hint – the dye is made from mollusks and is also called Tyrian purple.
* For some tactile fun, pull out some purple play doh or make some of your own. [Here](https://buggyandbuddy.com/our-favorite-homemade-playdough-recipe/#:~:text=Homemade%20Playdough%20Recipe%201%20Mix%20all%20the%20ingredients,parchment%20paper%20or%20wax%20paper.%20...%203%20Enjoy%21) is my favorite recipe.
* For very young children, go on a treasure hunt for purple items in the house or on your daily walks. Use paints or food coloring to experiment with mixing blue and red to make purple. Experiment with adding a little more of one or the other, or with adding white to make a lighter purple.
* In our story we learn that Lydia went to pray beside a river. Try creating an art mural of a riverside. This can be done with a roll of paper, or outdoors with chalk on the sidewalk or driveway. If possible, have everyone in the family work cooperatively to create the mural. Be sure to include plants and animals you might have seen in or around the water, as well as the group of women praying. If creating a mural on paper, consider incorporating different materials to add texture: yarn, torn bits of colored paper, grass or wildflowers picked from the yard, etc.
* Print out the attachment and cut out the Lydia figure. Children can color or decorate her clothing (remark again about the significance of the color purple), then roll the figure into a cone shape.
* Use blocks, Legos, or other toys you already have around the house to build a house for Lydia and the scene by the river. Have children use the Lydia figure (above) or other dolls to reenact the story. Children can take turns saying, “Welcome to my house,” or other phrases to show hospitality.
* Discuss with your children the importance of hospitality – in our homes, our church, our community, and our country. What kinds of things could you do as a family to welcome others?
* For a tangible activity to reinforce hospitality, make a welcome sign for your house. This could be a sign in the window or on the door made from paper, chalk writing on the porch, or a more involved permanent craft project. Whatever the materials you choose, strive to have the sign be a group effort while also talking about the connection between welcoming the stranger and Christianity.
* **For older kids and adults**, use a concordance to find Bible verses referencing hospitality, particularly towards strangers and those who are different from ourselves. Do you find a consistent message across both the Old and New Testaments? What does Jesus’ ministry have to say about how we treat others?
* Paul’s friendship with Lydia was unusual because he was a (male) Jewish leader, and she was a (female) Gentile. But God had called Paul to preach to the Gentiles, and God helped Lydia to hear and believe Paul’s message. Lydia responded by using her resources to help the early church. In general, women in Biblical times did not have many rights and were not well respected. But like Lydia, we still find women leaders in the Bible. Look up some of the following women to discover their contributions:
  + Shiphrah and Puah (Exodus 1)
  + Miriam (Exodus 15)
  + Deborah (Judges 4)
  + Queen Vashti (Esther 1)
  + Mary (Luke 1)
  + Mary and Martha (Luke 10)
  + Phoebe (Romans 16)