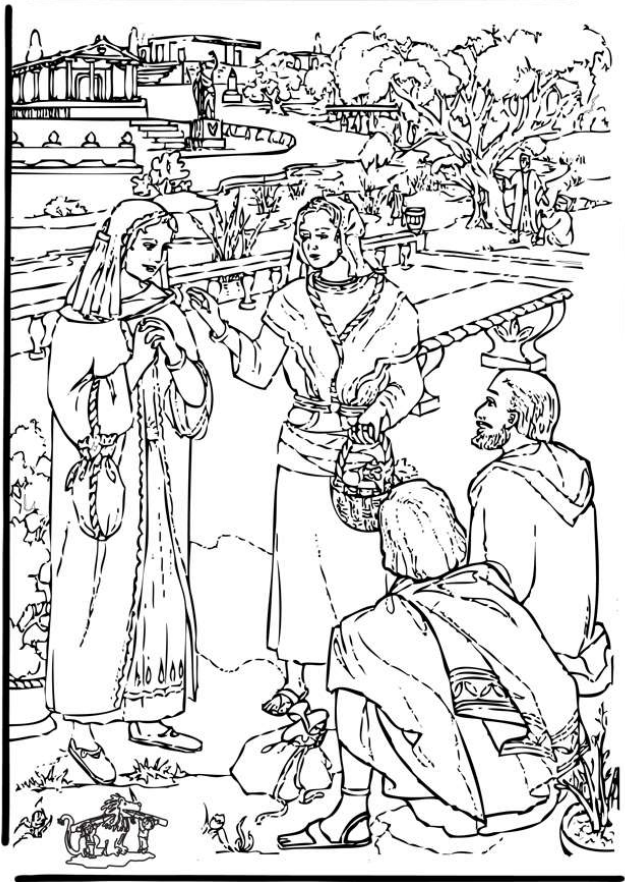


**WELCOME TO...**

**The Presbyterian Church of  
Saint David  
May 05, 2013**



**The acts of the early church**

With the death and resurrection of Jesus, the early church formed around the apostles now filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and began a ministry which continues to this day. As we follow the early church we find our own foundation and the basis of our faith.

*The Spirit is coming to bless us all with a new song: **Let our joy be complete!** Gifts for the good of all, poured out on all to teach us a new song: **Love one another!** Strangers and neighbors, foreigners and family will join in the new song: **No longer servants but friends!** Come, let our worship make a joyful noise, **Rejoicing in the friendship of God.***

Hymn: Let us praise (x2)

40

Prayer of Confession: *Almighty God, you poured your Spirit upon gathered disciples creating bold tongues, open ears, and a new community of faith. **We confess that we hold back the force of your Spirit among us. We do not listen for your word of grace, speak the good news of your love, or live as a people made one in Christ. Have mercy on us, O God. Transform our timid lives by the power of your Spirit, and fill us with a flaming desire to be your faithful people, doing your will for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

Assurance of Pardon: *Sisters and brothers, God is at work in us and with us! The glory that God has manifested in Jesus Christ is given to us even now so that we may live and love as one, for in Christ, we are one.*

Hymn: Lord have mercy

561

Scripture: **Acts 16:9-15** During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them. We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged

me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

### A FEW LEADING WOMEN

We've already heard Dorcas' story. "The contribution of women was made possible, to some extent, by the expansion of the gospel within the environment of the first-century family home and workshop, arenas where women could operate without violating societal norms for proper behavior. By the examples of Lydia, Prisca and Phoebe, this study examines the possibility and nature of women's leadership in the ministry of Paul. The lives of all three of these women reflect an affirmation of divine power: Lydia is witnessed at the very moment of conversion, Prisca when encountering the Apostle in mutual work and in the creation of the "church in her house," and Phoebe further along in the complexities of a missionary career for the church at Cenchreae. Each of these early believers in the emerging church demonstrates an exercising of the *charismata*." (V.K. McCarty) "The contrast between vision and reality is great. Nowhere is this brought out more clearly than between Paul's vision of the man of Macedonia and Paul's first convert in Europe, the woman Lydia. Great expectations sometimes eventuate in little experiences." (Harold J. Ockenga)

### A Litany of Women for the Church

*Gracious God, creator of women in your own image, born of a woman in the midst of a world half women, carried by women to mission fields around the globe, made known by women to all the children of the earth, give to the women of our time the strength to persevere, the courage to speak out, the faith to believe in you beyond all systems and institutions so that your face on earth may be seen in all its beauty, so that men and women become whole, so that the church may be converted to your will in everything and in all ways.*

Hymn: In loving partnership

759

### Invitation:

*The early church gathered wherever it could – in the temple, synagogue, along the banks of a river or in private homes. Wherever it gathered it did so knowing that Jesus was the host and we the invited guests! We are invited to share in the joyful feast of the people of God. At this table we come together as the guests of Jesus.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.*  
(Continue in thanksgiving) *O God, giver of all that is good,*  
**Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. May they be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other**

### Communion

**Prayer after Communion**     *Holy, gracious, God, here at this table your promise of life is made tangible.*  
**We have rested in the depth of your love;**  
**We have tasted your nourishing, nurturing presence;**  
**We accept you into our bodies, into our lives.**  
**Together, at this table, you have offered us life.**  
**Together, by your grace, we accept the life you offer.**  
**And we give you thanks.**

Hymn: Sent forth by your blessing

775