

4-WEEK CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM

# UNITED IN CHRIST



**THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STORE**



4-WEEK CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM

# UNITED IN CHRIST

THROUGH THE CHURCH,  
I AM SURROUNDED  
BY THE LOVE OF  
JESUS.

BIG IDEA



4-WEEK CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM

# UNITED IN CHRIST

HOW GOOD AND  
PLEASANT IT  
IS WHEN GOD'S  
PEOPLE LIVE  
TOGETHER IN  
UNITY!

PSALMS 133:1 NIV



4-WEEK CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM

# UNITED IN CHRIST

BEHOLD, HOW GOOD  
AND HOW PLEASANT  
IT IS FOR BRETHREN  
TO DWELL TOGETHER  
IN UNITY!

PSALMS 133:1 KJV



4-WEEK CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM

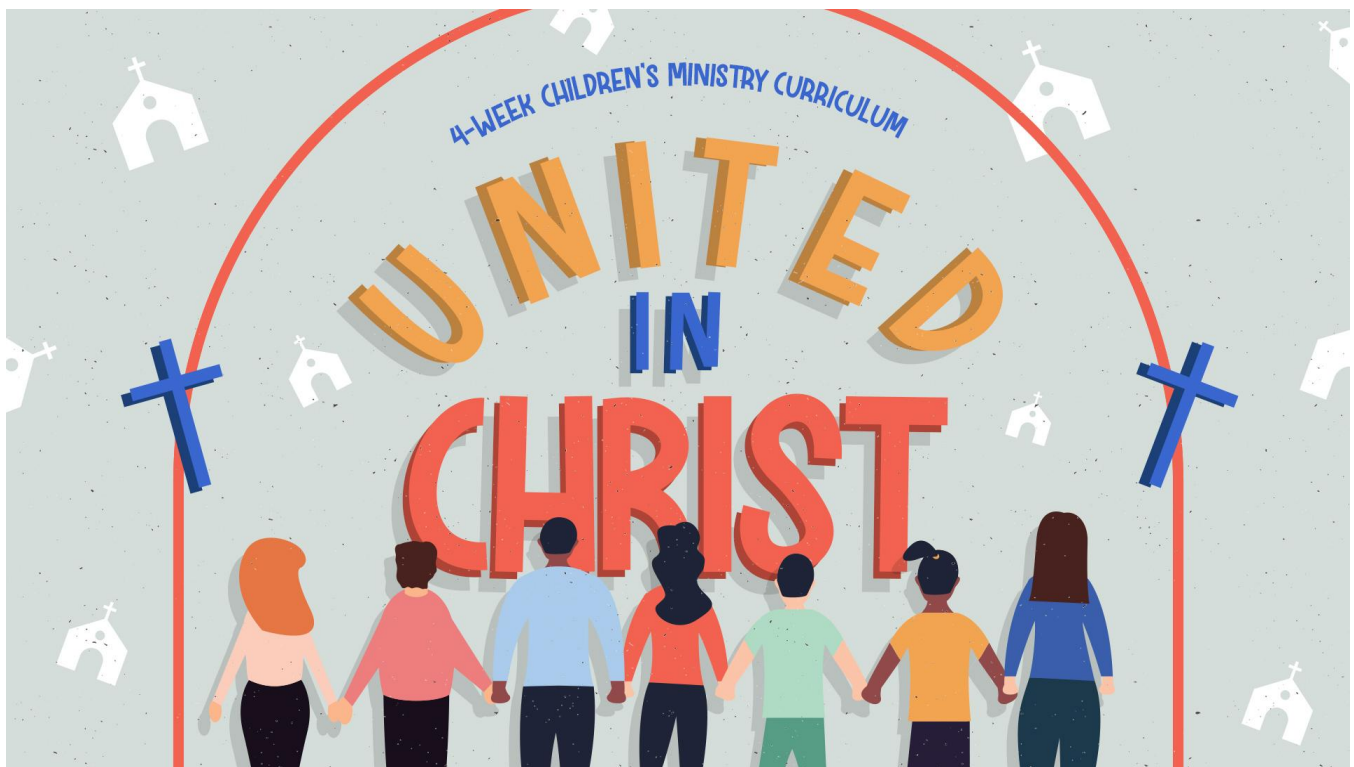
# UNITED IN CHRIST

BEHOLD, HOW GOOD  
AND PLEASANT IT IS  
WHEN BROTHERS  
DWELL IN UNITY!

PSALMS 133:1 ESV







**“United in Christ”** is about the togetherness we share with all believers. This world is full of division. Kids need the love and unity of the church more than ever. As followers of Jesus, we can experience joy in our relationships together. This 4-week curriculum series will help children discover the blessings of the church.

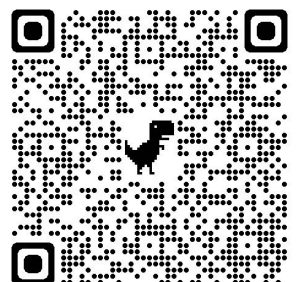
**Big Idea:** Jesus surrounds me with his love of Jesus through the church.

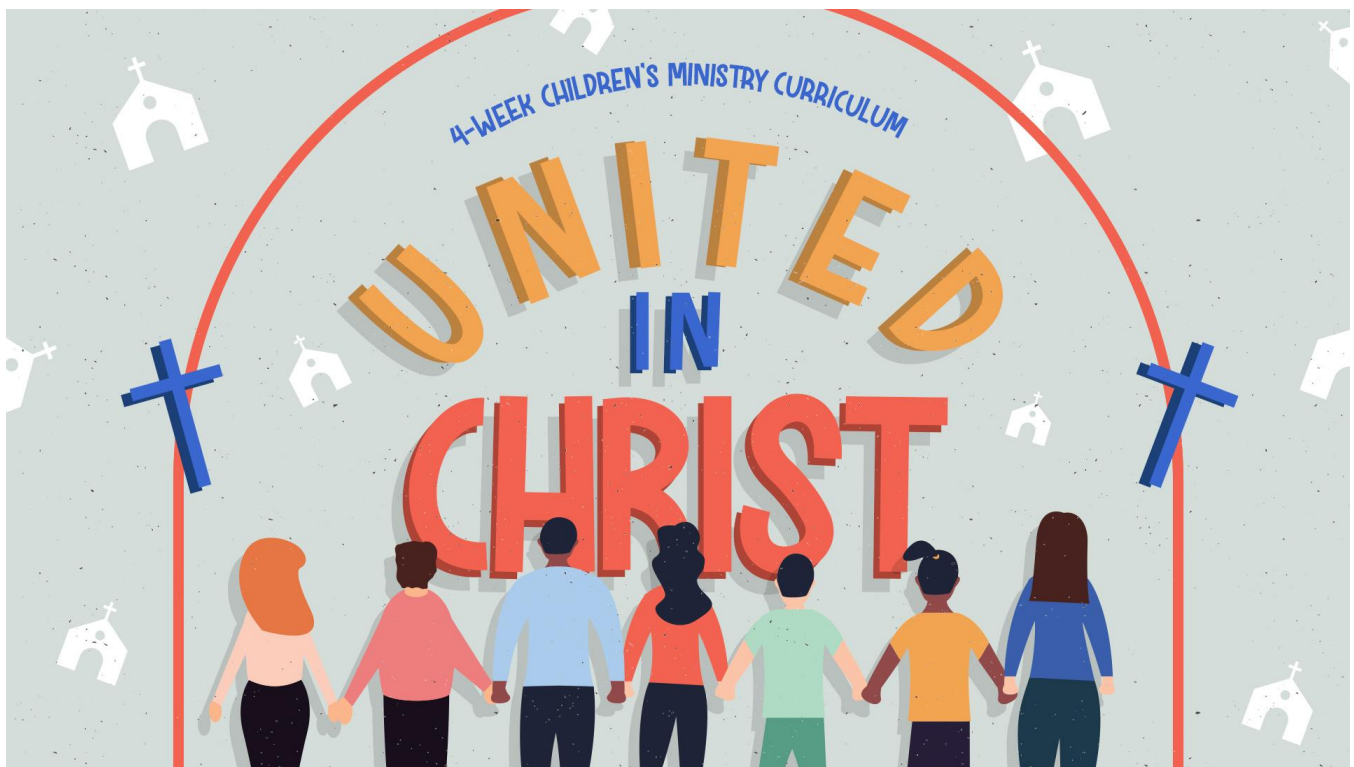
**Memory Verse:** Psalm 133:1

- Lesson 1: What Jesus Said About Unity. John 13:35
- Lesson 2: Unity as the Body of Christ. 1 Cor. 12:12
- Lesson 3: How to ‘Put On’ Unity. Gal. 3:26-27
- Lesson 4: What Unity Looks Like. John 13:12-17

**Source Files:** You are viewing the free sample lesson – use this link to purchase the full series.

<https://sundayschool.store/products/united-in-christ-4-week-childrens-ministry-curriculum>





## **Lesson 1: What Jesus Said About Unity**

### **John 13:35**

**Summary:** This world is full of division. Kids need the love and unity of the church more than ever. As believers in Jesus, we can experience joy in our relationships with one another. This week, students will learn how Jesus prayed for his followers to be united by love. The way we care about one another is a reflection of how God cares about us. Our togetherness and conflict resolution are Gospel testimony to the world.

**Gospel Connection:** Our love for one another is a witness to the power of the Gospel to change our hearts. Christian unity is possible because we are forgiven by God.

**Big Idea:** Jesus surrounds me with His love through the church.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 133:1

**Additional Passages and Stories:** Matthew 18:15–20; John 13:34–35; John 17:20–23

# Memory Verse Activity:

Group Reading Chain

Suggested time: 5–10 minutes

Supplies: Paper; marker or pen

Instructions:

- Write each word from the memory verse onto a separate slip of paper. Number each slip. Create multiple copies depending on the number of groups you will have. If your group needs an additional challenge, consider making sets of paper strips without numbers.
- Form groups of kids, so that each kid in every group gets a strip with part of the memory verse.
- Challenge the kids to put themselves in order based on the verse. If they struggle, tell them they can look at the numbers on the back of their papers to help.
- Once everyone is standing in order, instruct each kid to read their part of the memory verse in order, one after another, as seamlessly as possible.
- Have the kids repeat this multiple times until they are reciting the Bible verse smoothly and effortlessly.



# Lesson Illustration

Plastic Cup Unity

Suggested time: 5–10 minutes

Supplies: 24 plastic cups; a large tray or cookie sheet

Instructions:

- Invite a volunteer to help with the illustration.
- Place one plastic cup on the ground beside your volunteer. Ask the kid to try standing on this cup without crushing it.
- When the cup collapses or breaks, remove it.
- Take the remaining plastic cups and group them closely together on the floor so that their edges touch. Place the tray or cookie sheet on top of the cups.
- Ask the kid to try standing on the cups now without crushing them.

LEADER: You may not realize it, but we are a lot like those cups. On our own, we cannot withstand the burdens and hardships of this world. That's why God calls Christians to work together as a team. That's what we saw happen with the cups: When they worked together, they were able to do the job. That is the power of unity, which is what we are going to learn more about in today's lesson.

Transition to **Large Group Teaching**.

# Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 15–20 minutes

LEADER: For the next few weeks, we will learn about unity in the church. Does anyone know what the word unity means? [*Allow for responses.*]

Unity is when something is joined together rather than kept apart. If something is united, then it is whole and complete. Unity is also important to the church. It's so important that it was one of the last things Jesus prayed about before He was arrested. So that's why we are going to take some time over the next few weeks to learn more about unity—why it's so important, what it looks like, and what we can do to maintain unity.

Let's start by reading that prayer of his:

*READ: John 17:20–23*

LEADER: Jesus prayed for the future church—for all those who would ever hear about him and believe in him—which includes you and me!

His prayer for all of those future believers was that we would all be “one” together, in the same way that Jesus and the Father are one, which is perfect unity. As Jesus continued to pray, again He asked that his people would be unified as “one” or be in “perfect unity.”

Finally, Jesus explained why unity was so important: It is through the believers' unity that the world will know that Jesus was sent from God and that they will become aware of God's love for them.

Let's think about that for a moment: Christians can show God's love to the world around them, simply through their unity with one another.

Jesus' prayer for unity happened during the Last Supper. Jesus and his disciples had gathered together to eat the Passover meal on the night Jesus was arrested. Jesus taught the disciples many things and reminded them of the truth about God's

kKingdom. He told them that the elements of the meal reflected his broken body and the blood he would shed for them, and Jesus told his followers this:

*READ: John 13:34-35*

LEADER: Did anyone catch the one word Jesus used in that verse? [*Allow for responses.*]

Yes! He simply called it love. At its most simple, unity between believers is a form of love. And in this passage, he told his disciples that it was a *commandment* that they love each other.

Unity is so important because it demonstrates to the world that we follow Jesus and helps lost people sense God's love through us.

Unity is very important, but even when we are united with one another, it doesn't mean that things will always be perfect.

Just think about your own home or family. While you probably get along a lot of the time and love each other very much, there are still times when you disagree or aren't happy about decisions or the actions of others in your home. The same is true in the church.

As much as we strive to show one another love and be unified together, there are going to be times that we disagree and feel frustrated with one another. How can we love one another and be unified when we feel that way?

First of all, we should know that even when these things happen, we can *always* choose to respond with kindness and love. Likewise, unity between the church doesn't mean that we always have to agree with one another or go along with everything.

Often, the most loving thing we can do is to communicate with one another and address any sinful choices. Jesus taught how the church should deal with sin.

Here's what Jesus said:

*READ: Matthew 18:15-20*

LEADER: Jesus knew that we would sometimes make sinful choices, even after being united as the Church. Jesus taught us to start small, giving the person a chance to confess sin, turn away from it, and stay united.

We are still called to love others and the church, even when conflict arises and we have to deal with and speak up about sins. Even in those instances, our love for the church should still reflect God's love to the world around us.

# Small Group Discussion and Prayer:

Suggested time: 10–15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- What does "unity" mean?
- When the church is unified and acts as one, Jesus says that unity will reveal God's \_\_\_\_\_ to the world around us.
- After Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples on the night he was betrayed, Jesus gave them a new commandment. What was it?
- Does unity in the church mean that we always get along and agree? Why or why not?
- When disagreements do come up, how does Jesus want us to treat one another?

Take some time to share prayer requests. Then lead the kids in prayer. You may also read the prayer below.

Dear God,  
Thank you for giving us Jesus,  
Who showed us what love looks like  
And who taught us the importance of loving one another.  
We pray that we would follow him  
And work to love one another in our church.  
We also pray that the world around us  
Might see God's love through us.  
In Jesus name, Amen!



# Application Game

Human Knot

Suggested time: 10–15 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Form groups of about 6 kids. Instruct kids to stand in a circle
- Invite the kids to put their left hands behind their backs. Then they will each reach across the circle and use their right hand to grab someone else's right hand. They can hold anyone else's right hand, as long as the person is not standing directly beside them.
- Once all right hands have been connected, have them bring their left hands in and grab someone else's left hand. This person must be different from the person whose right hand they are holding and also cannot be someone they are standing directly beside.
- Without letting go of anyone's hands, the group must find a way to untangle themselves to stand in a circle again without having to hold hands in the middle, although some kids will face inward while others may face outward. (In some cases, the kids may do too good of a job knotting themselves together and be unable to untangle themselves. In this case, congratulate them and let them try again.)

LEADER: This game reminds us that we have to work together as a unified body of believers: Sometimes, there might be conflict between us and lots of untangling to do. Sometimes, we might be facing different ways. But despite those things, we are called to keep holding hands and to love one another as we work things out. In doing so, we can reflect Jesus' love to the world around us!

# Application Craft

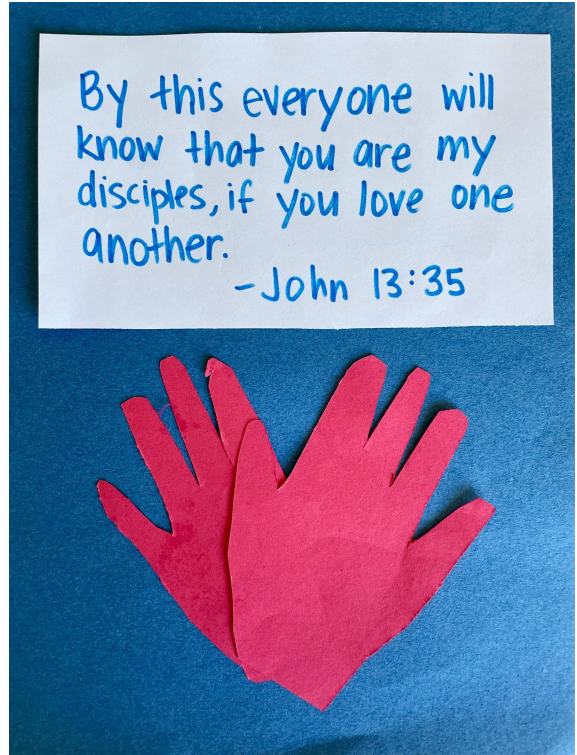
John 13:35 Hand Hearts

Suggested time: 10–15 minutes

Supplies: Red construction paper; additional pieces of construction paper in various colors; pencils; scissors; glue sticks; markers

Instructions:

- Give each kid a piece of red construction paper and a pencil. Instruct them to outline their hands, one at a time, onto the paper, making sure to space the two handprints apart so that they don't overlap.
- Instruct each kid to use scissors to cut out both of their handprints.
- Each kid should glue both handprints onto a clean piece of construction paper. They should orient the hands so that they overlap at the bottom of each hand and the fingers point out and toward the corners of the page forming a heart shape.
- Instruct the kids to write John 13:35 at the top of the page or on a separate page and then glue onto their paper.



LEADER: John 13:35 reminds us that when we love one another, the world will see Jesus in us and know that we are his followers. These pictures can be reminders for us to look for ways to use our hands to reach out into the world and love those around us!

# Bible Word Search

BELIEVERS - CHURCH - GOD - GOOD - JESUS - LIVE - LOVE

PEACE - PEOPLE - PLEASANT - PSALM - SONG - TOGETHER - UNITY

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R	P	A	U	A	L	I	V	E	T	N
M	L	K	N	P	O	P	E	K	X	C
B	E	L	I	E	V	E	R	S	S	H
S	A	S	T	O	E	A	T	T	T	U
G	S	K	Y	P	V	C	K	M	P	R
C	A	G	Q	L	J	E	S	U	S	C
X	N	O	O	E	O	L	O	K	A	H
N	T	D	F	O	K	P	N	X	L	G
Y	H	M	X	H	D	T	G	X	M	J
W	P	L	S	P	A	L	M	V	P	U
P	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	N	D

# Word Search Answers

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R P A U A L I V E T N  
M L K N P O P E K X C  
B E L I E V E R S S H  
S A S T O E A T T T U  
G S K Y P V C K M P R  
C A G Q L J E S U S C  
X N O O E O L O K A H  
N T D F O K P N X L G  
Y H M X H D T G X M J  
W P L S P A L M V P U  
P T O G E T H E R N D





# A Note for Parents

Kids need the love and unity of the church more than ever. As believers in Jesus, we can experience joy in our relationships with one another. Jesus prayed for his followers to be united by love. The way we care about one another is a reflection of how God cares about us. Our togetherness and conflict resolution are Gospel testimony to the world.

As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what was discussed. Guide your kids to put into practice the principles they are learning in church. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Why do you think unity matters so much to Jesus?
- When the church is unified and acts as one, Jesus says that unity will reveal God's \_\_\_\_\_ to the world around us.
- Can you think of a time you disagreed with a brother or sister in Christ? How should we handle situations like that?
- Talk to your child about ways that you have seen the church love another and how that has reflected God's love to you.
- Review this week's memory verse, Psalm 133:1.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.