

**Sunday, May 22, 2022 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church
Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**Bible Study –Acts 16:9-15
“Opened the Heart”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes)

In groups of two or three, respond to the following, “How do you discern God’s voice?”

Read Acts 16:9-15

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Acts 16:9-15 again

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- When can we be confident we have heard from God?
- What are some spiritual practices or habits that help us hear from God?
- By the wording of verse 13, it appears the group’s intent was to find a place to pray and instead found a group of women gathered. Instead of moving to a different place, they engaged the women. One of the women, Lydia, who was a dealer in royal (purple was the color of royalty) cloth is said to have had her heart opened. What might that mean? What might it mean for you to have an open heart?
- What is Lydia’s response to what she heard from Paul?
- **(R)** How is being a faithful witness often about opening our heart in the seemingly random situations and conversations we find ourselves?
- **(R)** How is Lydia a prime example of a Christian witness?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

God who continues to open hearts and minds, we confess that too often we have crowded out your voice, being too attentive to the many noises that bombard us. Break our hearts to hear your voice and to hear the hurts and cries of those around us. Empower us to be your faithful witnesses in our homes and in all the encounters we face. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.