

ADVENTURES WITH GOD!



Creative Worship Activities for Families, Children,
Churches and Camps

by Karen Holford

Hello,

Here are some of the ideas for children's time with God, and for family worships, that I have created for the *Journal* over the past few years. The *Journal* is an international quarterly magazine for SDA ministry spouses, and I write a collection of worship ideas and activities for each issue, based on different themes.

These ideas are for your own enjoyment, to share with others, and to translate and reprint. If you choose to translate these ideas, or reprint them, please include the credit - 'This was first published in the Journal for ministry spouses published by the GC Ministerial Department' and cite the date and issue details.

These ideas are designed to inspire children to have their own worship times, or to inspire families to have more creative family worship experiences. Some of these Ideas can also inspire activities for family camps, intergenerational worship services, outreach Ideas and family conversations.

Please let me know if these are useful to you and how you use them. I hope that you and the children and families that you serve will also enjoy them!

Blessings,

Karen

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A LONG WAY FROM HOME

MANY PEOPLE IN OUR WORLD are refugees. That means that it became so dangerous to live in their home—because of war, famine, disease, political situations, or poverty—that they made the difficult decision to leave and move to a safer place. Many people in the Bible were also refugees, including Jesus. God told His people to take care of refugees and the people who were strangers or newcomers to their country. Let's learn more about refugees in Bible times, and in our world today, so that we can pray for them and show them God's love.



JESUS WAS A REFUGEE

When Jesus was a baby, His family became refugees. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus had to escape to Egypt very quickly because Jesus' life was in danger. Read the story in Matthew 2:13-23.

- Imagine that you are Joseph and Mary and you have a small baby. You have only a few minutes to pack what you need for your journey to make your home in a foreign country. What would you choose to take with you?
- Set a timer for 10 minutes. Run around your house and look for some things that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus might have needed. Bring them back to your family. Look at what you have all chosen. Can you carry everything? Is anything missing? What else might you need? What could you leave behind? What are some things that you can't take with you but would be very difficult for you to leave behind?
- Use this activity to help you think more about the refugees in your area and what they might need.



PRAY FOR REFUGEES IN THE NEWS

Search this week's news for stories about refugees. Read the stories with your family. Stick a news story about refugees onto a large sheet of paper. All around their story, write sentence prayers for their needs.

IN GOD'S HANDS

God cares about all His children everywhere. He is especially concerned about those in danger and those who are sad, struggling, alone, or frightened.

- Draw around your hand and imagine it is the hand of God.
- Draw some refugees in the palm of the hand. As you place them in God's hands, know that He is caring for them.
- Pray that they will feel how close God is to them and how much He loves them.



POWERFUL PICTURES



Many great artists painted pictures of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus escaping from Bethlehem to Egypt. Search online for some famous paintings of “the flight into Egypt.” Look at some of these pictures. How realistic do you think they are? What is the family taking with them? What can you learn from each picture?

- Draw your own picture of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus traveling to Egypt. Or write a journal entry from Mary or Joseph that they might have made during the journey.
- Search for some photos on the internet of refugees traveling today. How are these different from the old paintings? Look at one of the photos of refugees and imagine the stories the people could tell you. Write their story or write a poem that describes their feelings and their hopes.

IMAGINE LIFE AS A REFUGEE

What do you think it would be like to move to a foreign country for a few years for your own safety? Imagine you are Mary and Joseph arriving in Egypt. Your clothes are different. You don’t speak the language. You don’t have many possessions. You have a young child. You don’t understand the culture. You don’t know whom to trust.

- How would you learn all the things you need to learn?
- What would help you settle quickly and adapt?
- How would you learn the language?
- What would be the kindest things the local people could do for you?
- How would you let your neighbors know that you are trustworthy and kind?
- What have you learned about Jesus’ family, and about refugees, by thinking about His story?

PRAY FOR SOFTENED HEARTS

- Take a piece of Play-Doh, salt dough, or clay. Form it into the shape of a heart and feel how soft it is. God wants us to have soft and kind hearts—hearts of flesh, not cruel hearts that are hard like stone (Ezekiel 36:26).
- Think about some of the people the refugees will meet on their journey. Some will be kind and welcoming. Some might treat them badly. Some are officials with specific responsibilities to carry out. Some will be uncertain, and they won’t know what to do or say to help the refugees.
- Hold your soft heart. Pray for the different people who will meet the refugees on their journey. Pray that these people will have soft hearts and be especially kind and welcoming.
- Now take your soft heart and press objects into it to make a pattern or design that reminds you of the experience of refugees in some way. Let it dry out, paint it or decorate it, and use it to remind you to pray for refugees around the world.

DIFFERENT REFUGEES, DIFFERENT NEEDS

Think about the different groups of people who travel as refugees. What are their challenges and needs as they move around in all kinds of weather, often with very little shelter or few supplies?

- Babies
- Young children
- School-age children
- Teenagers

- Young adults
- Parents
- Older people
- People who are ill or disabled

Choose one of these groups. List their needs, and think about how they might be feeling as they make their way to a safer place. Then pray for them. Or find a picture of a specific refugee and write a prayer for their needs.





A Long Way From Home

DANGEROUS JOURNEYS



Many people in the Bible were refugees in different ways: Noah's family; Jacob running away from his angry brother; Joseph when he was sold into slavery; Joseph's family when they moved to Egypt; the Israelites when they fled Egypt; Naomi and her family when they moved to Moab because of the famine in Bethlehem; Ruth, who left Moab to move back to Bethlehem with Naomi; and Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Which other Bible characters can you think of who had to travel to a different country or run away because they were in danger?

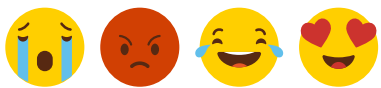
Choose one of these stories. Read it with your family or friends, act it out, or create a scene from the story with things you have in your home. Then choose some of the following questions to discuss:

- What were some of the possible dangers in the place they left?

- What were some of the dangers they might have faced on their journey?
- What were some of the dangers they might have faced in the place to which they traveled?
- Were there any people who were kind to them and helped them settle in their new country?
- If you were a refugee in this Bible story, what would you like someone to do for you?

Make an object with your craft materials, or things you can find, to show the struggles faced by refugees as they meet the dangers of where they are living, the dangers of a difficult journey, and the potential dangers in the place where they are going. Show someone what you made and encourage them to care about refugees too.

ALL KINDS OF FEELINGS



Jacob had to run away from home because he lied to his father and tricked his brother. Esau was so angry that he wanted to kill Jacob. So his mother sent Jacob on the long and lonely journey to her brother. Read the story in Genesis 27 and 28.

- Imagine how Jacob felt when he knew his brother wanted to kill him. Draw or create something to express his fear.
- Imagine how he felt as he said goodbye to his family, not knowing if or when he would see them again. Draw or create something to express his sadness and uncertainty.
- Imagine how he felt when he woke from his amazing dream! Draw or create something to express his hopefulness and joy.
- Read a story of a refugee. Think about their emotions:
 1. when they were living in danger;
 2. when they had to leave everything behind, even the people they love;
 3. when they experienced the kindness of God and others on their long, risky, and challenging journey to safety.

GOD CARES FOR OUR FEELINGS

Imagine that you are a refugee running away from a dangerous place and making a long journey to safety. What are some of the feelings you might be experiencing? Hope, fear, sadness, frustration, confusion, stress, exhaustion, peace, worry, etc.?

- Write each feeling on a different card.
- What Bible verses help you when you have that feeling? Write the verses on the cards too. Place the cards facedown on a table. Turn one over and pray for all the refugees who are experiencing that emotion right now.
- How might God, and those who care for the refugees, help them with their difficult feelings?

HELPING REFUGEES NEAR YOU

Plan something practical you can do as a family, or with your local church, to care for the refugees in your area. What would you like someone to do for you if you were a refugee?

- Maybe there are children who would love to have some of your nice old toys or some good clothes you have outgrown.
- Maybe there is a young person in your school who is a refugee and needs a good friend.
- Find out if there is an organization caring for refugees near you and ask what they need most.

Karen Holford sometimes helps special counselors who are working with young refugees in the United Kingdom.

Apples of Gold . . .

CREATIVE FAMILY WORSHIP ACTIVITIES ABOUT WORDS



Match these kind words of Jesus to the person or people to whom He said them (all verses NIV, 1984):

Mourners at Jairus' house	"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).
Disciples	"Leave her alone. . . She has done a beautiful thing to me" (Mark 14:6).
Man who was lowered through the roof	"The child is not dead but asleep" (Mark 5:39).
Zacchaeus	"Come and have breakfast" (John 21:12).
Dinner guests and Judas	"Come to me . . . and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).
One of the thieves crucified with Jesus	"Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9).
Nicodemus	"Your sins are forgiven" (Luke 5:20).
A crowd	"You will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

OUR FAVORITE WORDS

Some researchers discovered that the words we most like to hear are these:

"I love you!"

"I forgive you." *"Supper's ready!"*

Jesus said words like these to His friends and still says them to us today!

- What are your favorite words to hear?
- What are some kind things you can say to the people in your family and class?



APPLES IN FRAMES

Solomon said that kind, wise, and helpful words are like “apples of gold in settings [or frames] of silver” (Prov. 25:11, NIV, 1984).

What are some of the kind, wise, and helpful things that people say to you?

Write some of these special phrases and sentences on the golden apples in this silver frame.

Which ones do you like to hear most?


CHOICE WORDS

What kind things could you say to your friends in these situations? Write your caring words in the empty speech bubbles next to theirs.

Oh no! I forgot to bring my lunch!

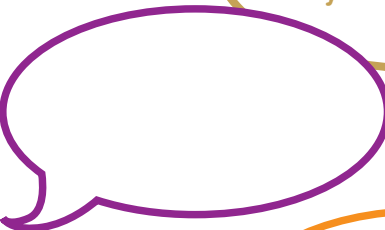


I'm really worried about the math test tomorrow.

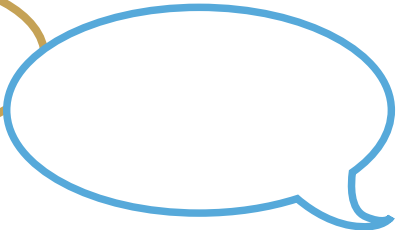


I feel really sad today because my mommy had to go to hospital.

My dad has a new job, so we have to move. I'm afraid I won't have any friends in the new school.



Please, will you play with me?

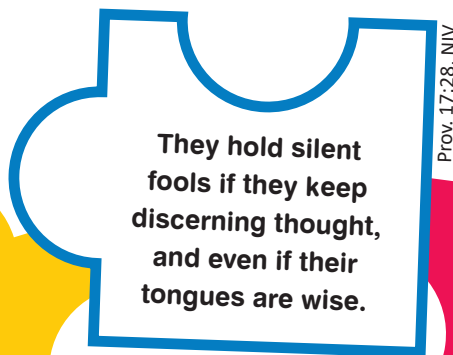
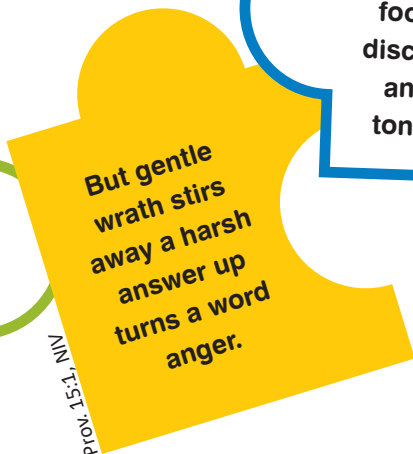
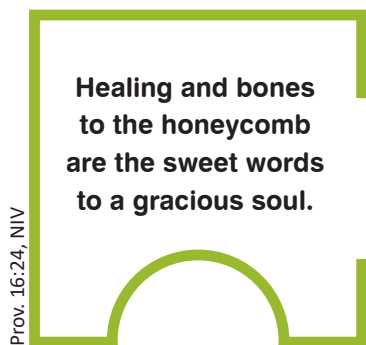


I don't feel very well.



PUZZLING PROVERBS

Arrange these mixed-up proverbs about words in the right order. Talk with your family about what you think these proverbs mean.



CREATIVE WORDS

Find a newspaper or church magazine. Choose a favorite verse from the Bible.

Cut out words and letters from the magazine to spell out the verse.

Stick them on a fresh piece of paper or card to make a trendy poster, a card to give away, or a scrapbook of decorated Bible verses.


Or choose your favorite style of lettering, graphics, and pictures to make a Bible verse collage for your room or your home.

Get inspired by searching the Internet for images of Bible verses on beautiful backgrounds. Why not make a great gift for your mom or dad by decorating their favorite Bible verse?

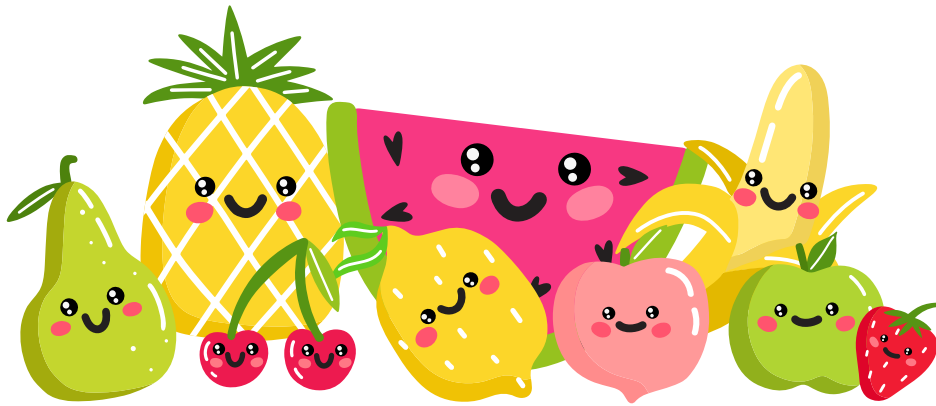
BIBLE WORD GAMES

- Work with your family to find a Bible verse beginning with each letter of the alphabet. Use “Ex” for X. If you find Q and Z difficult, look for verses that contain a word beginning with one of those letters.
- Choose a long Bible name like Methuselah or Melchizedek and see how many other Bible names you can make from the letters in the long name.
- Gather 5 old dice or 5 wooden cubes. Write a different letter on each side of the cube. Leave out Q and X, and write at least two different vowels on each cube. Take turns rolling the dice and see if you can make a five-letter Bible name from the letters you roll. You may have three rolls per turn. Roll all the dice the first time, and then choose which dice you will throw on the next two turns to try and spell a Bible name.



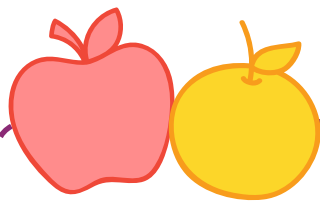
- Make a Bible name chain. Take turns thinking of a Bible character. Each person has to think of a name beginning with the last letter of the previous name. Example: AbrahamaM, MichaelL, LabaN, Naomi, IsaacC, etc. 

Karen Holford is the author of 100 Creative Activities for Sabbath, Pacific Press, 2006.



be fruitful!

WHAT GOOD FRUITS have you grown in your life recently? Which ones do you want to grow with the Holy Spirit's help? Use some of these ideas in your family worship. Ask the Holy Spirit to live in your life so that these fruits of the Spirit grow stronger in you.



FRUITFUL VERSE

Cut colored paper into fruit shapes. Read Galatians 5:22, 23 and write each of the nine fruits of the Spirit on a different fruit shape. Shuffle the papers and see how quickly you can arrange them in the right order. Or tie the fruit shapes to a length of string or yarn to make a verse garland.

JOY

Read Psalm 96. It's bursting with joy and praise! Write your own psalm of joy to God, or compose a happy song about the joy that God gives you, or make something with your craft materials to show how happy you are to be a child of God.

LOVE

Cut out a really big paper heart. Ask each person in your family how they felt God's love in the past week. Write all their answers on the big heart. Then give each person their own paper heart. Ask them to write their name in the middle of the heart and write around their name all the ways they like to be loved. Put the hearts where they can be seen to remind your family to share love with one another every day.





PEACE

Find a peaceful picture in a magazine or calendar or draw one yourself. Search for a Bible verse that helps you to feel peaceful. Write the verse on the picture and give your picture verse to someone who is going through a hard time. Or keep it to remind you to trust God for peace when you feel worried and upset.

PATIENCE

Love is patient (1 Corinthians 13:4). Which Bible characters do you think were the most patient? When is it hardest to be patient? When you are waiting in line? When you are waiting for your birthday or a vacation? When other children are annoying you? Try to practice patience this week. Think of fun things to do when you have to wait or when you ride in the car. Do or make something to help you to be patient and wait cheerfully.

KINDNESS

Make a list of people in your church who might be lonely, such as older people, people living alone, people who are new to your town or country, or someone who cannot leave their home. Work with your parents to do something really kind for each of the people on your list. Whenever you are being kind to others, it's just like you are caring for Jesus, and He loves what you do!

GOODNESS

What does it mean to have goodness in your life? Goodness is not about being perfectly obedient and doing everything right. The Pharisees tried to do this, but they cared more about themselves than other people, and that wasn't good at all. Perhaps goodness is when you love God and other people so much that you want to do the best you can, cheerfully and kindly, just because you love them. Think of someone in the Bible who was good. Act out the story of their life, write their story, or draw a picture from their life.



FAITHFULNESS

Read Hebrews 11 and discover some of the people in the Bible who were faithful. Draw around your hand. On each finger write one reason that you trust in God. Or ask some of the adults in your family and church to tell you their stories about why they trust in God. Write them in a faith journal.



HUMILITY

Jesus showed humility by washing the feet of His disciples. He showed them that serving others is very special. Wash the feet of everyone in your family and then rub some sweet-smelling lotion or oil into their skin. Or clean their shoes, take out the trash, or learn how to clean the bathroom. Humility is discovering that when you love other people, you will do anything for them, however unpleasant! And then you discover that this kind of service makes you feel warm and happy because you are also serving God.



FRUIT SALAD

Use your favorite fruits to make a fruit salad or smoothie. Try to include nine different fruits to represent the nine fruits of the Spirit. While you enjoy your treat with your family, talk about where you have seen the fruit of the Spirit in each other's lives. Thank God for all the amazing fruits He has created for us to enjoy!



SELF-CONTROL

Self-control is hard to develop, but it feels good! Give each person in your family a healthy sweet treat. See who can wait the longest before eating it. Practice letting other people go first when you are in line, or let them choose what they want first. Enjoy the great feeling of being able to control yourself for a little while.

FRUIT MATCH




Try to find a fruit that matches each of the fruits of the Spirit in some way and arrange them in order. If you can't get any of the fruits where you live, just draw pictures of them or make them out of modeling clay. For example:

Love – strawberries (because they are heart-shaped)

Joy – cherries (because they sparkle joyfully)

Goodness – apple (an apple a day keeps the doctor away)

Patience – pomegranate (because of the patience you need to pick out the seeds) 

Karen Holford writes from England, where she grows black currants and raspberries.



Bouncing Back!

WHEN TOUGH THINGS HAPPEN, we feel hurt and sad. That's normal. But we also have a choice. We can stay hurt, or we can learn from what happened and grow stronger. This is called being "resilient," which is the ability to bounce back when difficult things happen.

BOUNCY STORIES

Think of a time in your life when something tough happened, but you bounced back and grew stronger. Maybe you moved to a new home and were lonely, and then you made new friends. Perhaps your family faced a challenge, but with God's help you found a good way through. If you can't think of anything that has happened to you, then ask a parent or grandparent to tell you about a time when they bounced back. Write the story, or draw it like a cartoon. Remembering the past can help us meet challenges in the future.



BOUNCY PROMISES

God wants to help us be bouncy people. Whenever tough things happen, He can help us grow closer to Him, learn from Him, and trust Him to put things right.

- Look up these verses and match them to God’s promises for us.
- Choose your favorite promise and write it on a card, poster, garland, or bookmark to remind you of God’s incredible promise to you.
- Decorate the promise in your favorite way.
- Make another decorated promise and give it to a friend who needs encouragement.

BIBLE VERSE

1. Proverbs 3:5, 6
2. Isaiah 41:10
3. Psalm 34:18
4. Psalm 103:11-14
5. Isaiah 40:31
6. 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4
7. Isaiah 26:3
8. Jeremiah 29:11
9. 1 Peter 5:7
10. Psalm 23:4

GOD’S PROMISE

- I will always be with you
- I will be especially close to you when you face tough challenges
- When you hope in Me, I will make you strong
- When life is sad, I will comfort you
- I will give you peace
- Trust Me, and I will make your path smooth
- I am close to everyone whose heart is broken
- Give all your worries to Me because I care deeply about you
- I am merciful and kind, and I love you like My own child
- I have special plans for your life



- Choose one of your favorite promise verses from the list above.
- Find a bouncy ball and go outside with your family or some friends.
- Stand in a circle.
- Bounce the ball to one another. You may bounce it around the circle, or bounce it across the circle in a random pattern.
- Whenever someone catches the ball, they must say one word of the Bible verse, in order, until everyone has learned the verse.

JESUS HELPS PEOPLE BOUNCE BACK!

Jesus met many people who felt sad, lonely, and hopeless. But Jesus loved them and helped them to find hope and healing.

- Look up these Bible verses, name the person, and find out what happened.
- P.S. One of these passages is a parable. Can you find which one?

BIBLE STORY	MAIN CHARACTER OR CHARACTERS	HOW JESUS HELPED THEM TO BOUNCE BACK
John 18:15-18; 25-27; Acts 2:14-39		
John 4:1-42		
Matthew 8:1-4		
Luke 5:17-26		
Luke 19:1-10		
Luke 24:13-35		
John 11:17-44		
Luke 15:11-32		

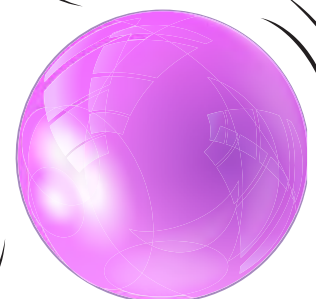
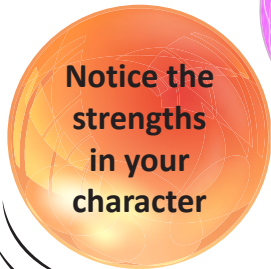
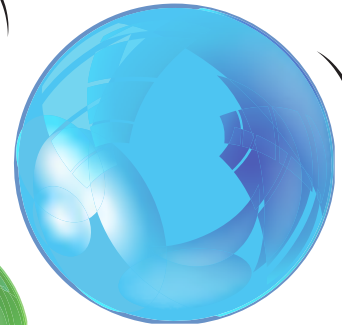
Can you think of other people who bounced back from trouble with the help of Jesus? Who were they, and how did Jesus help them to bounce back?



BOUNCE BACK TRAINING

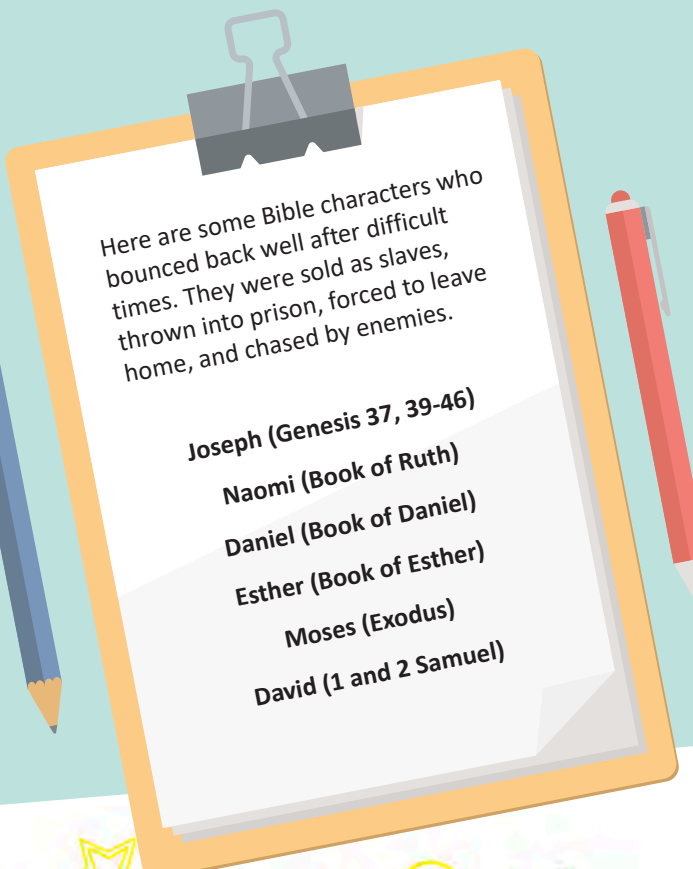
Here are some things you can do to bounce back from challenges.

- Circle the ones you are already doing in blue.
- Circle any others you would like to try in green.
- Add anything else you are doing, or would like to do, to the empty balls.
- Talk about these ideas with your family.





BOUNCY BIBLE CHARACTERS



Here are some Bible characters who bounced back well after difficult times. They were sold as slaves, thrown into prison, forced to leave home, and chased by enemies.

- Joseph (Genesis 37, 39-46)
- Naomi (Book of Ruth)
- Daniel (Book of Daniel)
- Esther (Book of Esther)
- Moses (Exodus)
- David (1 and 2 Samuel)

Choose one of these characters and read some of their story. Look for the character strengths that helped them to bounce back. What else can you learn from them? Tell their story in pictures, as a play, or even by gathering a series of objects from their life that you can arrange in a long line to help tell their story. Share the story with your family. Then discuss the following questions together. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers!

- What's your favorite part of this story?
- What's the most important message for you in this story?
- Which person in the story is most like you, or which part of the story describes your experience?
- What does this story tell you about how God cares for you through all the challenges in your lives?



HELP OTHERS BOUNCE BACK!

- Read Matthew 25:31-40.
- With your family, make a list of people you know who are going through tough times.
- Pray for them as often as you can.
- Make cards to give the people and write a special prayer or verse inside.
- Think about what you can do to help them, or ask them what you could do to help.
- Whatever you do for them, you are also doing for Jesus!

Karen Holford is a family therapist and director of the Family Ministries Department for the Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



CHOOSE WELL! CHOOSE

Happy!



HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY? Every day we have different sad feelings that drain us and different happy feelings that give us extra joy and energy. The feelings that drain the energy out of us are anger, frustration, fear, stress, guilt, shame, and sadness. Happy feelings are things like love, joy, peace, hope, inspiration, wonder, thankfulness, and fun.

Whatever is happening in our lives, we can always choose to experience the good feelings that help us live the amazing life Jesus came to give us (John 10:10). Here are some great things you can choose to do to help you feel better!

CHOOSE TO FOCUS ON GOD'S LOVE!



1 John 4:7-19

- God's love for you is powerful, deep, and unchanging. Imagine He is writing a letter to encourage and comfort you today. Write out that letter and read it aloud to yourself.
- Imagine you are having a goodnight hug on Father God's lap. What will you tell Him about your day, and how will He gently and lovingly respond to you?
- Tell God how you are feeling because He cares about your feelings. Chat to Him about your day and listen to His love in the quietness afterward.



CHOOSE PEACE!

John 14:27

- Think of three times when you felt calm and peaceful. What made you feel so peaceful? How can you do more of those things when you feel worried or afraid?
- Light a candle and watch the flame, or watch a flickering battery-operated candle. Imagine that Jesus, the Light of the world, is shining His peace and love into your life.
- Make a list of things that calm you. Watch waterfalls; listen to birdsong; smell the fragrance of oranges, lavender, and baking bread; massage your hands, etc.

CHOOSE INSPIRATION!

Romans 12:2

- Start a scrapbook or decorate a noticeboard with your favorite inspirational verses and quotes.
- Ask an older person to tell you an inspiring story from their life.
- Make a list of different qualities of God and be inspired by His loving character.



CHOOSE JOY!



Philippians 4:4

- Make a list of 100 simple and small things that bring you joy. Write each one on a separate index card. Choose one idea every day. Write on the back of the card what you did and how it made you feel.
- Write happy thoughts and quotes on slips of paper. Roll them up and keep them in a Joy Jar. Choose one whenever you need some extra joy. Make a Joy Jar for a friend.
- Place sticky notes, tags, or labels on your favorite things. On them write “This brings me joy because . . .”

CHOOSE WONDER!



Psalms 86:8-10

- List three things you can taste, see, smell, touch, and hear that fill you with wonder.
- Watch a video clip or documentary about something in nature that fills you with wonder.
- Make a collection of natural objects that fill you with wonder, such as a peacock feather, shells, bark, stones, etc.
- Take photos or find pictures to illustrate some of the wonders God made on each day of creation. How would you illustrate the Sabbath?

CHOOSE LAUGHTER!



Proverbs 17:22

- Invite everyone in your family to share what made them laugh this week.
- Watch some funny animal videos together and vote for the funniest.
- Ask a lonely or sad person to tell you what they enjoy doing most, and then invite them to do it with you.



CHOOSE GRATITUDE!

1 Thessalonians 5:18

- Stick a sheet of paper on your refrigerator or wall. Write what you are thankful for, and add pictures, photos, messages, Bible verses, and quotes to create a “gratitude wall.”
- Thank God for the different things you enjoy with each of your senses—things you can taste, touch, hear, smell, and see.
- Create and write a special thank-you card for God to thank Him for His love for you.

CHOOSE HOPE!

Romans 15:13

- List five things you look forward to every day. Make those moments extra special.
- Talk with your family about what you are most looking forward to in the earth made new (Revelation 21).
- Think of three times when you were worried about something but things turned out much better than you expected. What can you learn from these experiences?

CHOOSE TO USE YOUR SPECIAL SKILLS!



Romans 12:6

- Choose to do one of the chores in your home in the best way possible. Find a way to make it fun!
- Use one of your special skills to bring joy to someone else.
- Ask an older person to teach you a skill they learned when they were young. Enjoy your time together.

CHOOSE FLOW (POSITIVE DISTRACTION)!



Ecclesiastes 2:24

- Make a list of your favorite off-screen activities. Spend at least 10 minutes a day doing one of these enjoyable things.
- Fill a basket with interesting activities (books, puzzles, crafts, etc.). Dip into the basket when you need a distraction from your troublesome thoughts and worries.
- Read, listen to a good book, explore a simple craft activity, walk in nature, bake a cake, have a lovely hug, etc. Notice how good it makes you feel.

CHOOSE CREATIVITY!

Colossians 3:23

- Make something to remind you how much God loves you.
 - Design a machine to solve one of your biggest problems. How would it work and what would it do? Even though you can't really have this machine, what can it teach you about solving your real problems?
 - Choose one color of the rainbow at a time, such as red, and fill a page with all shades of that color using paint, crayons, markers, pieces of paper, pieces of pictures cut from magazines, etc. Then try orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and indigo. Enjoy the process!



CHOOSE KINDNESS!

Colossians 3:12

- Wrap a small gift and add a tag that says, "If you find this gift, it's for you! If it doesn't suit you, please pass it on to someone else." Then leave it to be discovered.
 - Be kind to each person in your family every day. Plan something kind to help others at least once a week.
- Write short, positive messages on sticky notes. Stick them in different places—inside a magazine, in a library book, on a package in a grocery store, on a mirror, etc.

FLOURISH LIKE A TREE!



Taking care of your emotions and choosing positive ones, like Paul in Philippians 4:6-11, helps you to stay emotionally, spiritually, and physically healthy. Draw a tree with a trunk, bare branches, and roots. Cut lots of leaves from any kind of green paper. Every time you choose to do something that is good for your mind, body, or spirit, stick a leaf on the tree to show that you are flourishing (Jeremiah 17:7, 8). **1**

Karen Holford enjoys using these ideas every day to help her stay happy and healthy! She teaches children, teachers, parents, and adults how to balance their emotions.



SCAN FOR AUDIO

CLOSE FRIENDS

FAITHFUL FAMILIES TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

THE LOVELY STORY OF Ruth, Naomi, Boaz, and their friends who lived in the little village of Bethlehem is all about being good friends in sad times and happy times and caring for each other. Read the Book of Ruth with your family and then try some of these activities.



NAOMI'S JOURNEY

In the story of Ruth, Naomi feels sad, happy, afraid, delighted, encouraged, lonely, despairing, and likely many other emotions.

- Make a timeline of her story from living in Bethlehem with her husband and sons, moving to Moab, grieving the loss of her husband and sons, choosing to leave Moab, saying goodbye to Orpah, journeying to Bethlehem with Ruth, settling in Bethlehem, and then seeing Ruth and Boaz marry and have baby Obed.
- What are some of the feelings she may have had at the different events in her story?

NEVER ALONE



Look at the timeline you made of Naomi's story. Who were the different people and friends who helped her during her sad and happy times? What did they do to support her?

What about your family? Draw a timeline of your family story. What are some of the ups and downs in your family story? What losses, changes, and joys have you experienced together?

Who helped you when you were sad and facing difficulties, and who rejoiced with you when you were happy (Romans 12:15)?



STORY CARDS

- Use blank postcards or cut white cards or paper into rectangles.
- Draw pictures to illustrate different scenes from the story of Naomi and Ruth. Write the story for each picture on the back of each card.
- Lay the pictures face up on a table and see how quickly your parents, siblings, or friends can arrange them in the correct order.



NAOMI'S BACKPACK



When Naomi left Moab, she could only take with her what she could carry on her back. What do you think she put in her “backpack” for the long journey back to Bethlehem, which would take several days?

If you had to leave your home with only one bag, what would you take? Find a good bag and choose carefully what you would take with you if you went on a walk for several days.

Invite other people in your family to gather what they would take on a journey. How and why did you choose to take different things?

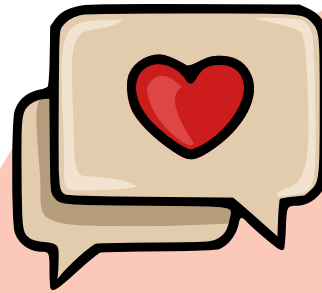
RUTH'S LUNCH



When Ruth went to work in Boaz's fields she ate roasted grains for lunch. Maybe it was a bit like popcorn!

- Make some popcorn or another roasted grain snack.
- Add some bottles of water and other food that Ruth might have eaten for lunch and find a good place to have a family picnic. If the weather is cold and wet, make space for a picnic in your home.

Boaz shared food with her because he knew she was poor. Make some more popcorn and take it to a hungry family or a lonely person.

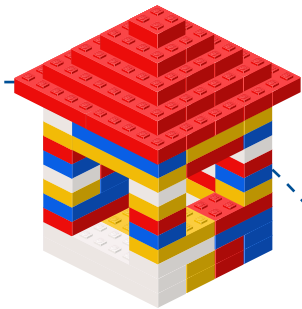


RUTH'S SPECIAL PROMISE

Read Ruth's special promise to Naomi in Ruth 1.

- How do you think Naomi felt when she heard these words?
- Why do you think these words are sometimes used at weddings?
- What special promise could your family make to each other?

NAOMI'S HOUSE



When Naomi came back to Bethlehem she moved back into the little home where she first lived with Elimelech. What do you think it looked like?

- Find a shoe box or other sturdy box that looks like a Bible time house with a flat roof.
- Ask an adult to help you cut a door and windows and then make some simple furniture for it, such as a table, a bench, little pots and pans, a fireplace, and little sleeping mats that can be rolled up and tied during the day.
- You could also use your favorite building blocks to build the house, and work together as a family to make little things for Ruth and Naomi to use.
- What do you think it would be like to live in this little house with Ruth and Naomi?



GATHER AND GLEAN

Ruth gleaned in Boaz’s field. Gleaning was a special way that rich people like Boaz could help poor widows, like Ruth and Naomi, to gather the leftovers from the harvest. Boaz asked his workers to leave extra grain on the ground so it would be easier for Ruth to gather large amounts of barley to take home in a big sack.

- Try gleaning indoors by asking an adult to sprinkle buttons or other small items on the floor for you to gather up. Then swap the buttons you collected for popcorn pieces, nuts, or other snacks.
- If there are any wild and natural foods to harvest near your home, go with an adult to gather the delicious nuts, grains, fruits, or vegetables that you can find.

SUPERKIND!

Kindness is a super-skill that anyone can have! Being kind to others is very good for you because it makes you happy and shows others a little piece of God’s loving character. How were some of the different characters in the story kind to other people?

Naomi was kind when she _____.

Ruth was kind when she _____.

Boaz was kind when he _____.

Boaz’s servants were kind when they _____.

Naomi’s friends in Bethlehem were kind when they _____.

How could you and your family be kind to a stranger or refugee in one of these special ways?



IMAGINE!

When Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, and Obed meet in heaven, they will discover some amazing things! They will find out that they are the ancestors of King David *and* of Jesus, their longed-for Messiah! Can you imagine what they will feel when they have a huge family reunion?

- Draw a picture of their family reunion in heaven. Or write the thoughts of Naomi, Ruth, or Boaz when they discover these special links in their family!
- Who are you looking forward to meeting in heaven? Draw a picture of the moment when you will meet Jesus for the first time! What do you want to say to Him, and how will you show your love for Him? When Jesus hugs you with a big smile, what do you think He will say to you?





BRING THE STORY TO LIFE

Try acting out the story of Ruth, Naomi, Boaz, and their friends in Bethlehem. Use the Bible as your script and ask one person to read the story while the rest of you act out the lines of your characters. Use some props, like sacks or pillowcases, for Naomi to carry her things to Bethlehem and for Ruth to gather grain. Use a baby doll for Obed.




THINK ABOUT IT.

- What do you like best about Ruth's story?
- What does this story help you learn about friendship?
- What is the most important lesson in this story for you?
- Which character is most like you?
- What does this story tell you about God's love for you?



PRAYER TIME

Ruth and Naomi faced big challenges, and God gave them friends to care for them and help them.

- Pray for your special friends. Cut sheets of paper into heart or person shapes. Write prayers for your friends on separate shapes.
- Ask God to help you be a good friend who is kind to others.
- Pray with your family and friends. Ask God to help you care for each other when life is painful and sad.
- Thank God for always being your very closest comforter and helper (Isaiah 41:10). 

Karen Holford loves the story of Ruth and Naomi because it tells how a little family cares for each other through the sadness and joys of life.

Cool to Be Kind

AMAZING KINDNESS

Hey, there! Did you know it's really cool to be kind? When people are asked whom they want to be friends with, or whom they want to marry, they usually want someone who is really kind to them.

Kindness is also a great way to be happy! One of the best ways to help sad people feel better is to encourage them to do something kind for someone else. It's also one of the best ways to share God's love with the people around us.



BIBLE VERSES ABOUT KINDNESS

Choose your favorite verse about kindness and memorize it. Write each word of the verse on a separate paper heart. Then arrange the word hearts in the correct order and stick them onto a sheet of paper. Here are some verses to choose from:

Matthew 5:40-44

Luke 10:27

Romans 12:9-21

1 Corinthians 13:4

Galatians 5:22, 23

Ephesians 4:32





THE KINDEST PERSON EVER

Jesus was the kindest person who ever lived.

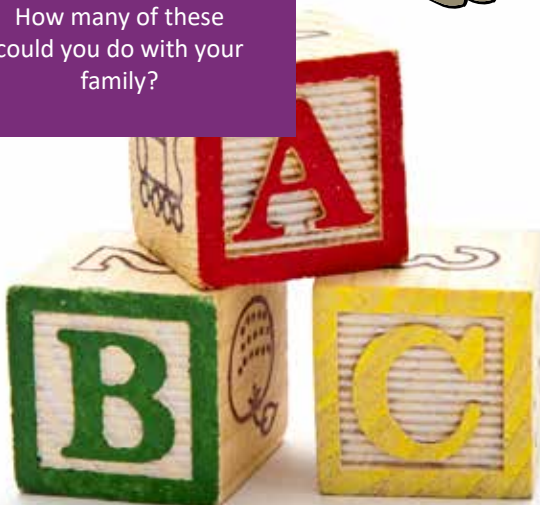
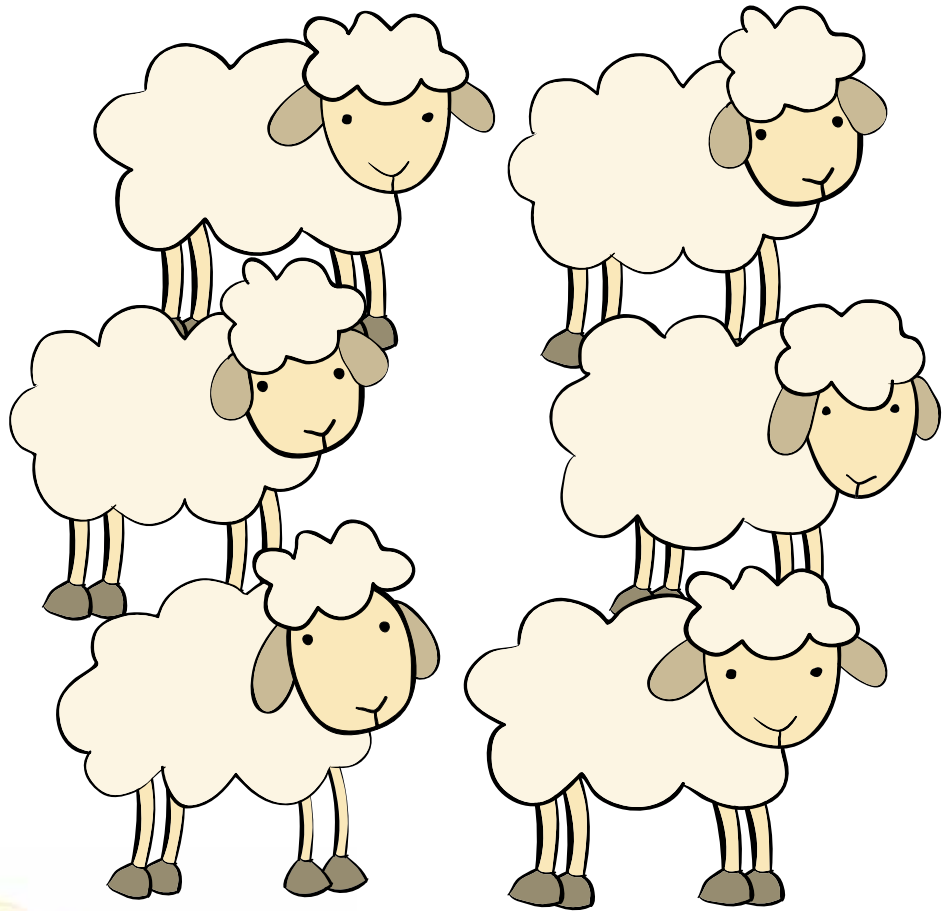
He spent every day being kind to people to show them how much God loved them. Jesus probably spent much more time doing kind things than He spent preaching. Often just being kind is a great way to be a witness for Jesus.

With your family, make a long list of all the different things Jesus did to show kindness, such as feeding hungry people, helping people to feel happy, welcoming little children, etc.

How many of these could you do with your family?

SHEEP AND GOATS

Jesus told a parable about the sheep and the goats. The sheep represented the people who did kind things for others. Read Matthew 25:31-46 and find out what the sheep/people did. Write each way they were kind on one of the sheep below.



ABCs OF KINDNESS

Make an ABCs of kindness with your family. Write all the letters of the alphabet down the side of a sheet of paper. Then think of at least one way you can show kindness beginning with each letter. A—Ask people how you can help them; B—Bake a cake or loaf of bread and give it to someone; C—Card (design a beautiful card to brighten someone's day); D—Drink (make a refreshing drink for someone); etc.



PICTURE IT!

Sometimes even tiny kindnesses can make a big difference. Once, when I was thousands of miles away from home on my birthday, someone left a little doughnut with a tiny candle in it on my doorstep. I've had lots of birthdays since then, but I've never forgotten that lovely little birthday doughnut.

Think about a time when someone was really kind to you. What did they do that was so special?

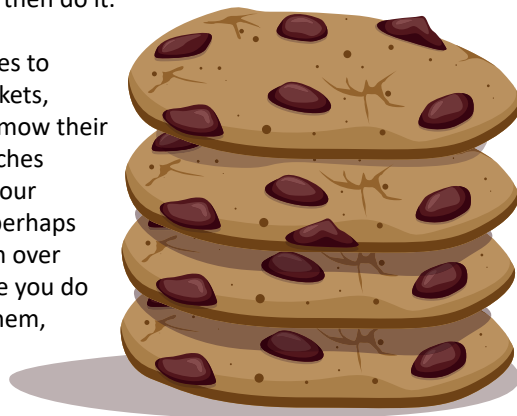
Invite everyone in your family to draw a picture of a time when someone was kind to them. Then show your pictures and tell your stories.

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Read Matthew 22:38, 39. Draw a map of your neighborhood or apartment block. Who are your 10 nearest neighbors? Talk with your family about how you could be kind to these 10 neighbors.

Walk around the area and pray for your neighbors as you pass their homes. Ask God to help you know what kind of kindness they need most. And then do it.

You could bake cookies to share, make fruit baskets, sweep the sidewalk, mow their grass, give them bunches of flowers, or share your garden produce. Or perhaps you could invite them over for supper. Every time you do something kind for them, you are showing them God's love.



KINDNESS STARTS AT HOME

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4. The best way to develop your kindness muscles is to be kind at home. There are lots of ways you can be kind in your family.

Use a large sheet of paper and draw a big plan of your house. Then choose one room at a time and draw pictures or write lists of all the ways you could be kind in the kitchen, the family room, the hall, the bathroom, your bedroom, the yard, etc. Walk around your home and do one kind thing in each room.

MATCH THE KINDNESS!

Match the Bible characters below to the kind things they did. Then search for their stories in the Bible. Can you think of other people who were kind too?

Rebekah	Shared her last loaf of bread
Dorcas	Packed a feast for David's hungry soldiers
Onesimus	Built a guest room for a visiting prophet
Abraham	Poured gallons of water for a herd of thirsty camels
Shunamite Woman	Made clothes for widows and orphans
Abigail	Visited Paul when he was in prison
Mary and Martha	Made a meal for passing travelers
Widow of Zarephath	Poured perfume on Jesus' feet
Mary	Cared for Jesus and His disciples

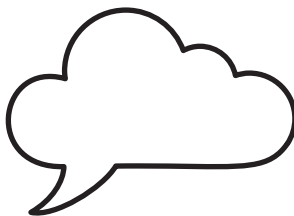
Cool to Be Kind



KIND HANDS

Read Colossians 3:23. Draw around your hands and then write a different way to be kind on each of your fingers. If you have little hands, draw around the hand of an adult so you have more space to write.

Add your favorite Bible verse about kindness. Put your picture where it will remind you to do kind things with your hands every day.



KIND WORDS

Read Ephesians 4:29. Our kind words can make a big difference! We can use our words to say we're sorry, to comfort people who are sad, to make people smile, to encourage people who are tired, to say thank you when people help us, and to ask people how we can help them best.

Draw a huge speech bubble, and fill it with kind things you could say to those around you.

ONE LITTLE CHURCH

A village church in Congresbury, England, celebrated its 800th anniversary by collecting 800 acts of kindness. They asked people to fill in a card saying when and how someone was kind to them. People deposited their cards in a little mailbox in the church.

This project made a big difference to their village, and other towns are trying this too. Maybe your church could do something like this.*

LOTS OF KINDNESS IDEAS

Check out this Web site: www.lifevestinside.com. It has a wonderful video you can watch called "Kindness Boomerang." You can also sign up for their daily email. It sends you lots of ideas for being kind, as well as short video clips about people being especially kind. You can also find lots more ideas at: www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas 

* www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/howaboutthat/12087318/UK-kindest-village-Congresbury-north-Somerset-800-random-acts-of-generosity.html

Karen Holford is married to Pastor Bernie Holford, and she is the Family Ministries Director of the Trans-European Division.



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS BIRTHDAY

When we do something kind for someone we don't know, it's often called a "random act of kindness." One family chooses to spend their birthdays doing random acts of kindness.

When Jake was 10, they did 10 acts of kindness together, and when Gemma was 12, they did 12 kind things. The children plan their acts of kindness, and their parents help them. They did kind things such as taping dollar bills to some toys in a dollar store, visiting the loneliest person in a senior care home, buying food for a homeless shelter, giving away bottles of water in the local park, and baking cookies to take to the fire station.

How old will you be on your next birthday? Why not plan a special day of kindness and see how much fun it is to make other people happy?

Creation Celebration!

HOLD A SABBATH AFTERNOON CREATION CELEBRATION. INVITE FAMILIES TO PLAN AN ACTIVITY FOR EACH DAY OF CREATION. FINISH THE CELEBRATION WITH A WONDERFUL PICNIC OR PARTY. HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED. CHOOSE THE ONES YOU LIKE BEST:



Guessing in the dark (older kids)

- Ask an adult to find ten natural items, such as fruits, vegetables, rocks, shells, seeds, etc., and arrange them on a tray. Cover them with a cloth so the children can't see what they are.
- Blindfold the children one at a time and ask them to feel under the cloth and tell you what they feel.

Searching in the dark (younger children)

- Choose a safe space. Blindfold a child and hide a large, soft object, such as a stuffed toy. Let them explore the space carefully until they find the toy. If they're very young, give them some extra clues.
- Talk about what it would be like to live on the earth before it had any light.
- Thank God for creating light so that we can see His beautiful world.



Cloud and water mobile

- Make a mobile by cutting a large cloud from white cardboard. Clouds hold the water above the earth.
- Then cut out raindrop shapes from blue cardstock. Use thread to hang the droplets from the cloud.
- Search through your Bible to find positive verses about clouds and rain. Write these on the cloud and raindrops.

Water ABC

- Water comes in all shapes and sizes!
- See if you can find something made from water that begins with each letter of the alphabet. If you get really stuck, search an atlas for the names of rivers and seas around the world.
- For example: A—avalanche, B—brook, C—creek, D—dew, E—estuary . . .

DAY 3

GREEN AND GROWING THINGS

Natural rainbow scavenger hunt

- Lay a long strip of white paper on an outdoor table or on the ground.
- Take a basket and hunt for different-colored natural objects. Don't pick a whole plant; just pick a leaf or a single flower petal, or pick up things already fallen to the ground. Be careful not to pick up anything poisonous or dangerous (go with an adult to be sure).
- Bring your goodies back to the paper and arrange them in the colors of the rainbow.
- Thank God for filling our world with so many beautiful plants.



DAY 4

SUN, MOON, AND STARS

Constellation cards

- Find some black cardstock (or paper) and a pack of gold or silver sticky stars.
- Look at a book of star constellations.
- Copy the patterns of the stars onto the black paper using the sticky stars.
- Find out everything you can about each constellation.

Star candle shade

- Find some sheets of tracing paper (or thin paper), a pack of sticky stars (or cut out foil or paper stars), a roll of double-sided tape (or glue), and a battery-operated candle.
- Stick a scattering of stars onto the tracing paper.
- Stick a strip of double-sided tape along one of the short edges of the paper. Roll the paper into a cylinder, overlap the edges, and use the tape to stick the edges together.
- Turn on the candle and place the star shade around it.
- Alternatively, place the shade over a small glass containing a votive candle. But be very careful not to burn anything or anyone.

Hand print sun

- Find large sheets of white paper, paintbrushes, yellow and orange paint, a bowl of soapy water, and some paper towels to help you clean up.
- Paint your hand so the fingers are pale yellow and the palm is orange and darker yellow. Swirl the colors together on your palm. Press your hand onto the paper—you will be making a sun with yellow finger rays and a yellow-orange center. Turn your hand around and make several prints so that you make one large, circular sun. You may need to repaint your hand. Don't worry if your paper isn't big enough or your sun isn't quite in the middle of the paper. It will still look artistic and beautiful!



DAY 5

BIRDS AND FISH

Bird feeder

- Make a bird feeder. Find a plastic container or lid and ask an adult to make some holes in it. Thread some twine through the holes so it can hang from a branch. Then spread the container with peanut butter and birdseed. Hang the container from a branch. List the birds that come and feed from your feeder.
- Or thread cereal O's onto a pipe cleaner (chenille stick), twist it into a heart, and hang from a branch.

Shell search

- Find a small collection of shells.
- Have each person choose one shell and look at it very carefully for a while.
- What do you notice about your shell? What makes it special or beautiful?
- Mix the shells back together and see if you can find your shell again by looking at them carefully.

Animal chain game

- Play a game where you take turns naming an animal beginning with the last letter of the animal that the person before you chose.
- If the person before you said “kangaroo,” you might say “orangutan” or “okapi.” Remember, they must be land animals, not birds, fish, or sea creatures. Example: CoW—WalruS—SheeP—PiG—Giraffe.
- Only use each animal once. To make the game harder, repeat the list of all the animals that have been named in the game, and then add your new animal to the end of the list.

Guess the animal

- Hunt for leaves, twigs, stones, seeds—any natural objects lying on the ground.
- Use your objects to make a picture of an animal. Draw in the dirt or sand too.
- Visit each other’s animals and guess what they are.
- Or use craft materials or building bricks to create animals for everyone to guess.

Special people!

- People are the very best part of God’s creation! Everything He made was for us—to make our world a wonderful place. Draw a picture of yourself on a sheet of paper.
- Pass each picture around the family or group.
- Think about how much God loves each person, and then write something encouraging or loving on each person’s paper.
- Give all the pictures back to the original artists so they can read the lovely messages.



PEOPLE AND ANIMALS

Creation Celebration!



DAY 7

REST AND CELEBRATE!


Creation picnic

- Have a lovely picnic. Serve your favorite fruits and nuts—the kind of food that Adam and Eve would have eaten in Eden. To make it more fun, make pictures on your plates using pieces of fruit and nuts.

Thank you card

- Gather your best craft materials, paper, pens, glue, collage supplies, etc.
- Design a special thank you card for God.
- Write a letter to God inside the card, thanking Him for your favorite creations.

Praise time!

- Have a praise time together. Sing your favorite praise songs, pray, and thank God for all of His amazing creations. 

Karen Holford enjoys living in Scotland. She thanks God for all the beautiful hills, birds, trees, flowers, animals, and friends!



MINISTRY in motion

Exploring Best Practices for Your Ministry

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Don't Be Afraid!

Have you ever felt scared? Most people feel afraid at some time. Fear can be a good thing because it can keep us safe from doing something dangerous and hurting ourselves.

Always remember that God cares for us and is with us to help us when we feel afraid. Here are some worship activities for you and your family to help you think about what makes you feel afraid and how you can help each other feel safe.



Around the time Jesus was born, lots of angels came to visit earth. They must have been quite dazzling and beautiful. But even though they were kind and had good news to share, they often surprised people and made them jump! Read these verses to see what the angels said to help people not be scared of them.

Luke 1:11-13 **Luke 1:26-30** **Luke 2:8-12**

ANGEL PICTURE

Take a piece of white typing paper and turn it so that the short side of the paper is at the bottom. In the lower half of the page draw a picture of a time when you felt afraid. Then turn the sheet over and hold the picture up to the window so the blank side of the paper is facing you. You should be able to see your first picture through the paper. Draw a very faint line along the top edge of the picture you have drawn. Now draw an angel on the back of your picture and above the line you have drawn. When you have finished, turn the page over to show your original picture. Pick up the picture and hold it up to the light to see the angel taking care of you in your scary moment.

WHO WAS AFRAID?

In your family, take turns choosing one of these Bible characters. Look in your Bible to find a story about a time when they might have been afraid. How would you have felt if you were in their situation? How did God help them when they were afraid? Which of the stories do you like the best? Which person's story helps you when you are afraid? How do these stories help you to understand more about God's love and care for you?

- Esther
- Daniel
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
- Noah
- Moses
- Jacob
- Joseph (Jacob's son)
- Elijah
- Naomi
- Jonah
- David
- Simon Peter

FAMILY TALK

As a family, use this sentence to tell others what makes you feel afraid and what helps you to calm down. Don't forget that adults can sometimes be scared too! "I can feel afraid when _____, and what helps me to calm down is _____." Here are some ideas to choose from for calming down:

- Praying
- Remembering God is with me
- Asking someone to help me feel safe
- Repeating a Bible verse
- Breathing deeply and slowly
- Remembering a time when I managed my fear well
- Making a list of 10 things I am thankful for
- Other (What else would you and your family add to the list?)

Write out your list of helpful things to do when you are afraid so that you can look at it whenever you need to. Remember that when a person makes you feel afraid, you must always tell someone who cares for you so that they can help you be safe.

BUBBLE BREATHING



Whenever you feel afraid or worried, try this safe way of breathing that naturally helps you calm down. If you have ever blown bubbles, imagine you are blowing bubbles now. Take a deep breath in through your nose, as deep as you can. Hold it for 3-4 seconds, then blow your breath out as s-l-o-w-l-y as possible, or as if you are trying to blow a big bubble without popping it! Do this 3 or 4 times, and you will soon feel more relaxed and calm. Practice with your whole family! Why not blow bubbles if you have them? Imagine that all the bubbles blowing away are like giving all your fears and worries to God and watching them slowly disappear.

STORY TIME

Ask some of the adults in your family to tell you the story of a time when they were afraid and God helped them. Perhaps you could record or video them telling their stories. What can you learn from their stories that will help you with your own fears?

BIBLE PROMISES ABOUT FEAR

God knows that our world can be a very scary place at times. He has given us lots of promises that He will be with us and that we don't need to worry about the most important things. He loves us very much, and He promises to come and take us back to heaven one day. Here are some lovely Bible verses to help us with our fears. Choose the one you like best, write it out, and decorate it with your favorite colors. Ask an adult to help you look for other Bible verses that can help when you feel afraid.

- **Deuteronomy 31:6**
- **Psalms 23:4**
- **Psalms 46:10**
- **Isaiah 41:10**
- **John 14:27**
- **Philippians 4:6, 7**





PEACE, BE STILL!



With your family, act out the story of Jesus in the storm in Mark 4:35-41. Find a large piece of blue or white fabric, like an old tablecloth, to use as the lake. Then find something small, light, and unbreakable to be the boat. You could cut a boat shape from a cardboard box, use a small dishwashing sponge, or even use a sock! Ask each person in the family or group to hold onto the corner or edge of the fabric and place the "boat" in the center of the cloth. Start by rippling the fabric "lake" together by gently shaking the edges that you are holding.

Talk about how tired Jesus is after a long day of teaching and helping people. He is so tired that He finds a snug place in the boat and falls asleep. Rock the boat gently so that Jesus will fall asleep. But soon a storm comes. Now ripple the lake so that the waves get slowly bigger and bigger and the boat is tossed about.

Think about how it feels for the disciples in the little boat in a big storm! Tell each other how you would feel if you thought your boat would turn over or sink. Then have one of the grownups call out "Peace, be still!" As quickly as possible, hold the blue fabric tight and still to make the lake calm down. Pray together, thanking God that He has the power to make all our storms disappear. Also thank Him for being with us, like Jesus, in the storms that come.



PAUL'S SECRET FOR SCARY PLACES

Paul was in some very scary places. Read about some of them in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Which one of these would you find the scariest? But Paul learned some good ways to help himself when he was in a scary place. When he was in prison and close to death, he wrote an amazingly happy letter to his friends in Philippi. In Philippians 4 he wrote a list of things that can also help us feel less afraid, like being thankful, feeling content, finding joy in God, and thinking about lovely things instead of scary things. Read Philippians 4 with your family and find some of Paul's secrets. Choose one of them to try with your family.



MAKE A REMINDER

Use your best craft materials, or whatever safe things you can find in nature. Make something to remind you that God is always close to you when you feel afraid. Perhaps you could write a Bible verse on a piece of fabric that you can keep in your pocket. Create a picture for your home or gather some objects that remind you of God's care and protection, like a heart, candle, or key, and place them in a bowl. Tell your family about what you made or why you chose what you gathered.

***Karen Holford** is married to Pastor Bernie Holford, and they live near London, England. She is sometimes afraid when she looks down from high places. When she prays, God helps her to feel calm and safe again.*



EVERYBODY'S Welcome!

IN GOD'S LOVING AND ACCEPTING family, everyone is welcome. No one is left out! God wants us to feel super-loved by Him so that we can share all that lovely love with people who don't feel very loved.

TEAMWORK!

God uses all kinds of people working together in teams to do great things for Him. Draw a line from the team to the job they worked on together. Next to the task, write down some of the things that might have helped their team to work well together.



TEAM	WHAT DID THEY DO TOGETHER?	WHAT DO YOU THINK HELPED THIS TEAM TO WORK WELL?
Jesus and His disciples (Mark 6:30-44)	Built a large boat	
Stephen and seven deacons (Acts 6:1-7)	Mended a very big wall	
Jesus and some servant helpers (John 2:1-11)	Took a picnic to David and his soldiers	
Noah and his sons (Genesis 6:9-22)	Won a battle over the Midianites	
Nehemiah and his helpers (Nehemiah 3)	Made gallons of special drink for a party	
Abigail and her servants (1 Samuel 25)	Made sure the Greek widows received food along with the Jewish widows	
Gideon and 300 men (Judges 7)	Fed bread and fish to a large crowd of people	

If you could be in one of these teams, which one would you choose? Why? Imagine you were right there in the story. Act out the story with your family. Tell each other what it might have been like to be part of that team, and which part of the story you enjoyed the most. What do you think each team learned about God?





BEAUTIFUL VARIETY

God loves variety! That's why He filled the world He made for us with countless kinds of people, flowers, insects, birds, fish, animals, trees, and other plants. Do something with your family to celebrate God's love of variety. Make a fruit or vegetable salad using lots of different fruits. Create a picture using every color of crayon, marker, or paint that you have. Go for a walk and listen for all the different birdsongs. Or collect as many different kinds of grass as you can find. Photograph or count all the different flowers or trees you can find in your garden, at a park, or along your walk. Think of all the ways the people in your own family are different and how those differences bring joy to you all. Thank God for His amazing love of variety!



MAKE A REMINDER

God wants us to love everyone because each person is one of His children and one of our brothers and sisters. Gather your best craft supplies, natural materials, or whatever else you can find. Use them to create something special to remind your family that everyone in the world is precious to God. How does understanding God's love for everyone change how you see the people around you every day? How does that understanding change how you show them His love?

THE KIND STRANGER

- Gather some things together to tell the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Find some rough sackcloth to make a desert, a torn strip of fabric to make a path, some stones, a box to make an inn, seven little people from your toy box (or draw little people on paper or smooth stones), a tiny bottle of water, a strip of cloth for bandages, some small coins, a toy horse or donkey (or draw one on paper or a stone).
- Lay the rough cloth on the ground. Put some bigger stones under the cloth to make hills and some smaller stones on top to make hiding places for robbers. Arrange the torn strip of fabric to create a path over the ground. Place the little inn at one end of the path and put a person inside to be the innkeeper. Hide two people behind stones to be the robbers. Then use the other people to be the priest, the Levite, the man who gets robbed, and the good Samaritan.
- Act out the story in the scene. Let the Samaritan use the water and bandages to help the injured man and the coins to pay the innkeeper. At the end of telling your story, talk about who is the neighbor to the injured man—the Samaritan, the priest, the Levite, the robbers, and even you. And who is your neighbor?
- Jesus told this story to help people think about their unkind and disrespectful attitudes toward people who were different from them. He wanted His listeners to understand the importance of being kind and loving to everyone in the world. When we are kind and generous to others, they can see how loving and generous God is, too.



Take a large sheet of paper and draw the biggest possible heart on the paper. Imagine this is the heart of God. Everyone in the world is loved by God more than we could ever imagine! Write or draw something in the large heart to remind you of God's wonderful love for everyone. Or cut people's faces out of old magazines and see how many different faces you can stick inside the big heart. When you have finished, gather your family in a circle around the heart. Thank God for His amazing love for every unique person in the world. Ask God to show you how you can share His love with a lonely person today.

ACT IT OUT

Read John 3:16, 17. These are beautiful verses about God's love for everyone and how He longs for everyone to be saved. Work together with your family to create some actions to go with these two verses. Then show someone your actions, or make a video of yourselves to demonstrate these verses. Maybe you could find another way to share this good news with someone else.

JESUS INCLUDES EVERYONE!



While on earth, Jesus went out of His way to show that every single person was precious to Him, especially those who often felt ignored, unwanted, and unloved. Let's explore how Jesus included everyone. What can we learn from Him to help us be friends with people who are different from us?

PERSON	BIBLE STORY	HOW JESUS TREATED THEM AND WHAT HE DID FOR THEM
A Roman centurion (foreign enemy)	Luke 7:1-10	
Mothers and children	Mark 10:13-16	
A man who made other people feel afraid	Matthew 8:28-34	
A foreign Canaanite woman with a sick child	Matthew 15:21-28	
A desperate man who was paralyzed	Luke 5:17-26	
A Samaritan woman	John 4:4-26	
A thief on the cross	Luke 23:39-43	
A woman who was being shamed in public	John 8:1-11	
A disciple who betrayed Him	John 21:1-19	
A tax collector	Luke 19:1-10	
A man with leprosy	Matthew 8:1-4	

Which of these stories do you like the best? How would you feel if you were a person in your favorite story and Jesus treated you with such warm kindness? How can you show the kindness of Jesus to everyone you meet?

BE A BLESSING

Think of someone who is from a different culture than yours. Perhaps they are a neighbor on your street or a new student in your school. Invite your family to pray together for this person. Ask God to show you how to welcome this person and their family into your home. Do something to make them feel special. Perhaps you could each share your favorite foods from your own culture. Listen to them so that you can understand more about their life, and find new ways to bless them with God's love.

BELOVED BADGES

In one church all the children came together to make badges for all the adults. Every badge said: "I am a beloved child of God!" The children went into the church and pinned them on all the grown-ups. Some of the older people cried because they had never known how much God loved them until they read their badges. What could you do for the adults in your church to let them know that everyone is included in God's loving welcome? **7**

Karen Holford is director of family, women's, and children's ministries for the Trans-European Division. She loves finding fun ways to share God's love with others!



Exploring Sabbath

WHAT MAKES SABBATH THE BEST DAY OF THE WEEK? WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR FAMILY TO DO ON SABBATH? HOW CAN YOU ENJOY HELPING TO PREPARE FOOD FOR SABBATH?

HERE ARE SOME FUN WAYS TO EXPLORE SABBATH WITH YOUR FAMILY.



SABBATH GIFT BAG SCAVENGER HUNT

Sabbath is a gift from God: Mark 2:27.

- Place a colorful gift bag on the table. Send your family on a scavenger hunt to find things that remind them how Sabbath is a special gift from God.
- Here are some ideas:
 - A battery: Sabbath helps us to recharge our batteries.
 - A clock or watch: Sabbath is time to spend with God and with each other.
 - A candle: Sabbath is a light that guides us through our week.
 - A treat: Sabbath is a delight.
 - A feather: Sabbath is a day to explore nature and God's creation.
 - A heart: Sabbath is a day when we can help others.
- Hand lotion: Sabbath is soothing and comforting.
- A bottle of water: Sabbath is refreshing.
- What else can your family put in your Sabbath gift bag?

BEST SABBATH EVER

The Sabbath is a delight: Isa. 58:13 (NIV).

- What was the best Sabbath you ever experienced?
- What made it so special?
- Invite everyone to draw a picture or write a story of their best Sabbath ever.
- Show your pictures and tell why this Sabbath was so special.
- Make a list of what makes Sabbath delightful for your family. Then plan a really delightful Sabbath in the next month.

THE TOUGH AND THE SWEET

Share the ups and downs: Rom. 12:15.

- Place a bowl of nuts and raisins on the table.
- Tell each other about the best thing that happened to you during the past week.
- After everyone has shared their "best things," thank God for the good things that have happened and celebrate together by eating a few raisins. The raisins represent the sweetness of God's goodness.
- Then tell each other about a challenge you will face in the week ahead.
- After each person has shared their challenge, eat some nuts together. The hard nuts represent the challenges that God can help us face. Pray that God will help you with these challenges.

A RECIPE FOR SUPER SABBATHS

- What great ingredients would you include in a super Sabbath?
- Use colored paper and cut out simple fruit shapes.
- On each fruit shape write an activity you'd like to do with your family on Sabbath: a walk in the woods, a Bible treasure hunt, an adventure, helping others, an amazing praise service, an exciting children's story, camping out, etc.
- Dream big and choose your favorite Sabbath "ingredients."
- Collect all your "ingredients" in a large bowl, adding as many as you like. Then read the ideas and use them to inspire your future Sabbath plans.



THANK YOU FOR SABBATH

A Sabbath psalm: Ps. 136:1.

- Find all your best craft materials and pens.
- Design and make some amazing cards to thank God for making Sabbath for us.
- Write a thank you message to God in your card.
- Share your cards with each other.



SABBATH COLLAGE

Ex. 20:8-11; Isa. 58:13 (NIV).

- Think about what Sabbath means to you.
- Look through a stack of old church papers and magazines. Cut out words and pictures that describe Sabbath and make a collage of them on a large sheet of cardstock.

SABBATH CRAFTS

Ex. 20:8-11; Isa. 58:13 (NIV).

- Gather all your best craft materials.
- Invite everyone to make something special to inspire your family to have wonderful Sabbaths.
- You might decorate candles or candle holders that you can use on Sabbath.
- Or design Sabbath placemats for your table. Arrange pictures and stickers on cardstock, then laminate the placemats to protect from spills.





SABBATH MANNA

Read the story of Sabbath and manna: Ex. 16:13-31.

- Use a marker pen to divide a paper plate into seven sections, like a pie.
- Label each section with a different day of the week, writing the names of the days around the edge of the plate.
- Make a “tent” in your room, under a table, or under a large sheet.
- Lay a clean cloth on the floor outside your tent and sprinkle it with sweet popcorn (pretend manna).
- Pretend to sleep in your tent and wake up on Sunday.
- Collect some manna (sweet popcorn) and place it on your plate in the “Sunday” section. Eat it, then pretend to sleep again. Repeat this for each day. Then collect twice as much on Friday and eat only half of it. “Wake up” on “Sabbath” and eat the rest.
- Talk about how you can help prepare food for Sabbath by making simple desserts, chopping vegetables, setting the table, etc.

SABBATH: A DAY OF JOYFUL CELEBRATION

A psalm for Sabbath: Ps. 92.

- Read this happy psalm together.
- Many Jewish families welcome Sabbath with a traditional celebration.
- Plan some happy ways to celebrate Sabbath in your family. Maybe you could make a Sabbath banner, write your own celebratory song, create a special party or agape meal, play some fun Sabbath games, light candles, create a different fruit-juice cocktail each week, drive to a beautiful place to watch the sunset, have tiny treats or surprises, hunt for a special object, share what you most appreciate about each other, bless each other, and so on.
- Keep your Sabbaths surprising and delightful by adding new ideas to your list.

A DAY FOR HELPING OTHERS

Jesus heals on the Sabbath: Matt. 12:9-13.

- Get a pencil and a sheet of paper.
- Spread out your fingers and draw around each of your hands.
- On each finger write one way you and your family could help people on Sabbath.
- Collect all of your ideas and plan a great way to help someone on Sabbath during the next few weeks.

Karen Holford is the author of 100 Creative Activities for Sabbath, Pacific Press, 2006.

Share your best Sabbath ideas with others. Why not take turns planning special Sabbath activities for all the families in your church?

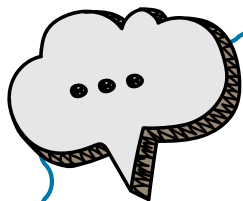


SCAN FOR AUDIO



FROM LONELY TO LOVED

IT'S NORMAL TO FEEL LONELY at times. When we do, it's a reminder to look out for other lonely people and make friends with them. Jesus felt very alone when He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane just before He died. Adam felt lonely after he named all the pairs of animals. Elijah felt lonely when he ran to the mountains. David felt lonely and wrote a song about it. And Naomi felt lonely when her husband and sons died.



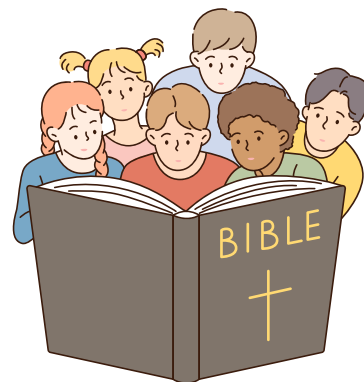
TALK ABOUT LONELINESS

Discuss these questions with your family:

- When do you feel most lonely?
- What do you do to help you feel less lonely?
- What have other people done that helped you feel less lonely?
- Guess when the person to your left is most likely to feel lonely. And then guess what they would like others to do for them when they feel all alone.

We might even feel lonely when we have our loving family and friends all around us. We can't always guess how other people are feeling. What could you do to let one another know when you're feeling lonely? And what would you most like people to do to help you feel less alone?

GOD
NEVER
LEAVES
YOU



God loves you so much that He never leaves your side! Read these Bible verses: Psalm 139:1-3, 7; Psalm 145:18; Jeremiah 31:33; Matthew 28:20; John 14:16, 17; Romans 8:38, 39; Ephesians 3:14-19; Hebrews 13:5. Can you find other Bible verses that tell us that God always loves us and will never leave us?

Choose your favorite Bible verse about God being with you. Make something that will always remind you of His loving presence. It might be a key ring or a tag for your schoolbag or a little poster for your room.

JESUS NOTICED LONELY PEOPLE

Jesus was always looking out for lonely people. His heart was filled with love for them, and He wanted them to know how much they were loved by God. Read the stories of Jesus to find 10 people who might have felt lonely before they met Jesus. Then describe how Jesus made friends with them and showed them His love. Can you find more than 10? Keep looking and learning about the ways Jesus noticed and loved lonely people, such as lepers, widows, children, and people from other countries.



LONELY PERSON	WHAT JESUS DID TO SHOW THEM THEY WERE LOVED AND PRECIOUS
1. Zacchaeus	Invited Himself for dinner
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	



LONELY TO LOVED

Choose one of your favorite stories about Jesus from the last activity. Imagine you are one of the lonely people in the story. Write a story about meeting Jesus and feeling His love. Or draw pictures of the person in the story before and after they met Jesus.





WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Paul describes lots of things we can do for others so we feel loved by God and by each other. Look up these verses in the New International Bible to discover what you and your family can do to help others feel less lonely.

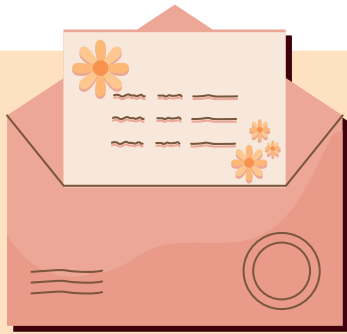


VERSE	ACTION	3 THINGS YOU CAN DO
1 Thessalonians 5:11	Encourage them by cheering them on toward their goals.	Send them an encouraging message. Tell them you are praying for them. Cheer them on—support their team!
2 Corinthians 1:3, 4	C _____ them when they are sad.	
Romans 15:7	A _____ them by being their friend when others reject them.	
Romans 12:10	H _____ them and learn how to show them respect.	
Galatians 6:2	C _____ b _____ and help them when they are struggling.	
Romans 12:13	S _____ your things with them when they don't have enough.	
Romans 12:13	Be h _____ and invite them to your home.	
Philippians 2:3, 4	Show i _____ in them and their lives by listening to them.	



YOU'RE WELCOME

Have you ever visited a church for the first time and felt shy and lonely? Why not start a welcome ministry for the new children in your local church? In some churches some of the older children take turns welcoming all the other children coming to church. They smile, greet them, and tell them they are welcome! Some churches give little welcome bags to visiting children. These might have a Bible storybook, a Bible puzzle book, crayons, a button/badge, a welcome card, and perhaps a guide to the service in your church in child-friendly language. Some also include healthy juice and crackers. Perhaps you could encourage your church to start a special ministry to children like this. Maybe you and your family could prepare the welcome bags.




ALWAYS INVITED

Have you ever felt sad and lonely because you weren't invited to a party? What was that like? Read John 14:1-3. Jesus has gone to prepare a place and a party in heaven for all His friends. Jesus loves you, and He doesn't want you to miss out on being with Him forever! Design and write an invitation to yourself from Jesus to remind you that you're always invited to His party. And it will be the best party ever!



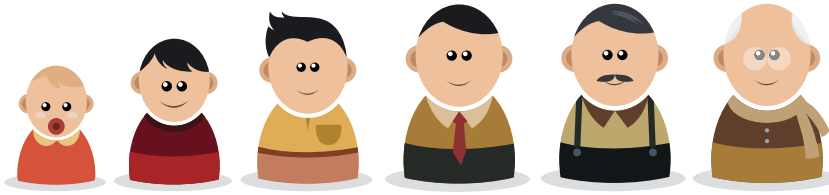
LONELINESS PROJECT

Work with your family to create a special mission/care project for people who might be lonely. Prayerfully think about what you could do to welcome and encourage some of the lonely people in your school, church, street, or community. Jesus reached out to lonely mothers, children, sick people, foreigners, hungry people, and disabled people. You could write prayer letters to them, visit them with food, invite them to your home, ask them to join you on a picnic, go to the park with them, or listen to them. Whenever you do something kind for a lonely person, you are also doing something kind for Jesus (Matthew 25:40). 

Karen Holford is very shy, and she often felt lonely when she was younger. When she learned to look for other lonely people and do kind things for them, she made lots of interesting friends!



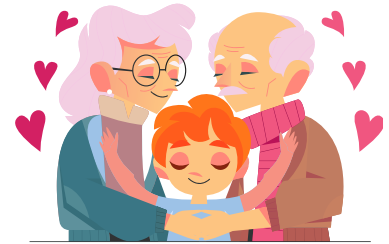
SCAN FOR AUDIO



GENERATIONS OF BLESSINGS

In the Bible there are lots of stories of older people and young children blessing each other. Look up the stories about the older people, and write down the name of the child in each story.

OLDER PERSON	CHILD	BIBLE VERSE
Simeon and Anna		Luke 2:25-38
Lois		2 Timothy 1:5-7
Naomi		Ruth 4:14-17
Abraham and Sarah		Genesis 21:1-7
Eli		1 Samuel 3
Zechariah and Elizabeth		Luke 1:57-66
Mordecai		Esther 2
Naaman		2 Kings 5



SHARE JOY!

Make a list of the older people you know well—family members, church members, and neighbors. Work with your family to write a list of 10 ways you could bring joy to an older person. Invite them for a meal, take them on an outing, bake them a cake or loaf of bread, make them an encouraging card, ask them questions about their life, and find ways to help them.

Can you see a pattern in these stories? The children brought joy to the older people, and the older people enjoyed caring for the little ones! They taught them, guided them, and blessed them. Choose your favorite Bible story from this list and act it out with your family. Perhaps your favorite seniors would like to see and hear this story too!



THANK YOU, SPECIAL PEOPLE

Make beautiful thank you cards for the senior people in your church community. Thank them for loving God for so many years. Thank them for the special things they have done for your church. Bless one senior each week with a lovely card.



SENIOR TREAT BAGS

Work with your family, Sabbath School class, or Pathfinder club to pack “treat bags” for the seniors in your church. Make them for the older people who can’t come to church very often. Create a card with your favorite Bible verse on it. Write a short prayer of blessing and thanksgiving. Include cartons of juice, soft treats, loving gifts, and a big paper hug (see below).



LET'S VISIT!

Senior people often enjoy short visits filled with joy. They can easily get tired, so don't stay too long. Bring a simple gift, like a small cake, homemade bread, soft fruit, or flowers. Sing a happy song. Pray. Recite or read a Bible verse. Tell or act out a Bible story.

Give them a picture you have drawn. Finish with another song and a prayer. Choose some of the special questions from the list below and listen to their stories.



Use a roll of plain wallpaper or stick several sheets of strong paper together. Lie on the paper and stretch your arms out to each side. Open your hands. Ask a grown-up to draw around your arms and hands, ending when they reach your shoulders and chest. Stand up and draw two lines across the chest area, joining the outlines of the arms together to make a long strip with an arm and hand at each end. Cut out this long shape. This is a paper hug! The person who receives a paper hug can imagine the long arms being wrapped around them.

Decorate the paper hug in any way you like and write loving and happy messages on the strip, as well as Bible verses and short prayers. Fold it in half and carefully roll up the hug, starting with the hands so the fingers are safely inside. Tie it with a bow and give it to a lonely senior person to remind them that they are loved.

QUESTIONS TO ASK OLDER PEOPLE:



- How did you come to know Jesus?
- Tell me one of the best things that God has done for you.
- What do you most want to thank God for this week?
- How has God surprised you?
- What has God made that fills you with wonder? Why?
- Who is your favorite Bible character? Why?
- What other questions would you like to ask older people?



MEET THE SENIORS!

Involve teenagers and older children in a video project. Ask them to make short videos of the senior church members telling stories about their relationship with God and their faith experiences or sharing something about their lives that maybe no one else knows. One young person discovered that an elderly gentleman in her church had won a gold medal in the Olympics! These videos can be shown as special spotlights in a service, perhaps in the month when it is the senior person's birthday. Or they can be used in a special program to celebrate seniors.

SENIOR TEA PARTY

Hold a tea party for seniors in your home or at church. Help the older children and teenagers make food that the older people will enjoy. Teach the children how to serve the food politely by carrying plates and offering different things to the older people. Perhaps you could also have a concert including talent from the older people as well as the children so they learn more about each other.



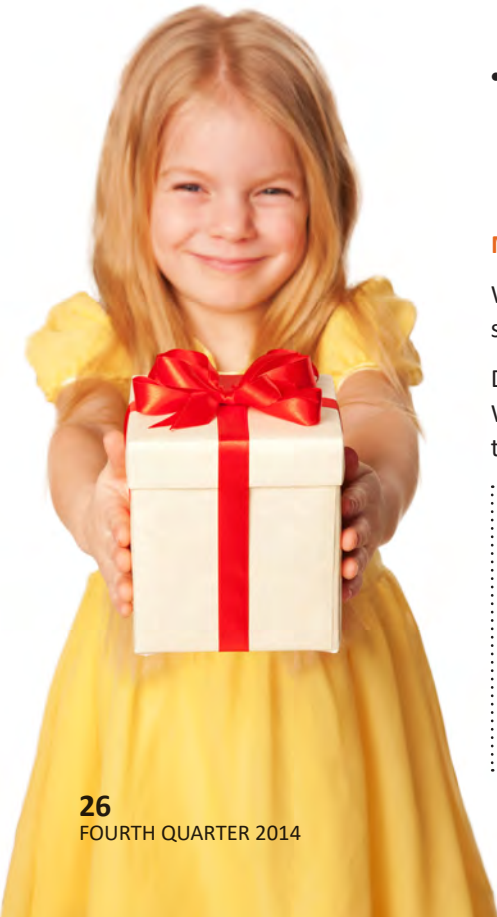
ADOPT A GRANDPARENT/ GRANDCHILD

Match the children in your family or church to an adopted "grandparent" of the same gender as the child. Encourage them to visit with each other, along with one of the child's parents, after the church service each week. The child can give a small gift to the older person, such as a handmade card, bookmark, homemade cake, produce, or flowers. The senior person could bring a small treat for the child based on their interests, such as stamps, seeds to grow, storybooks, or a small cake or sweet. The adopted grandparent and child can pray for each other and tell each other what they have learned about God each week. ■

Karen Holford is the Family, Children's, and Women's Ministries Director of the Trans-European Division. She likes to laugh with children and learn from older people!

Giving is fun... and good for you!

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU ACTUALLY FEEL HAPPIER WHEN YOU GIVE SOMEONE ELSE A GIFT THAN WHEN SOMEONE GIVES YOU A GIFT (ACTS 20:35)? WHY IS GIVING OFTEN MORE FUN THAN RECEIVING? TALK ABOUT THIS WITH YOUR FAMILY AND LISTEN TO WHAT EVERYONE HAS TO SAY.



PAPER PRESENTS

- At family worship time, find a stack of plain paper and your Bible.
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.
- Why is it important to give generously and happily?
- Use the paper to make a pretend present for each person in your family. Tear, fold, and scrunch the paper into different shapes, such as a plane ticket, an animal, a car, etc.
- Then give each person the present you made for them. See if they can guess what it is (they may need a few clues!) and then tell them why you'd like to give them that special present.
- This is a fun way to be generous with each other, even if you don't have any money!

MY GIFT!

What's the best gift you ever gave to someone else?

Draw a picture of it in the box below. What did you enjoy most about giving this special present?

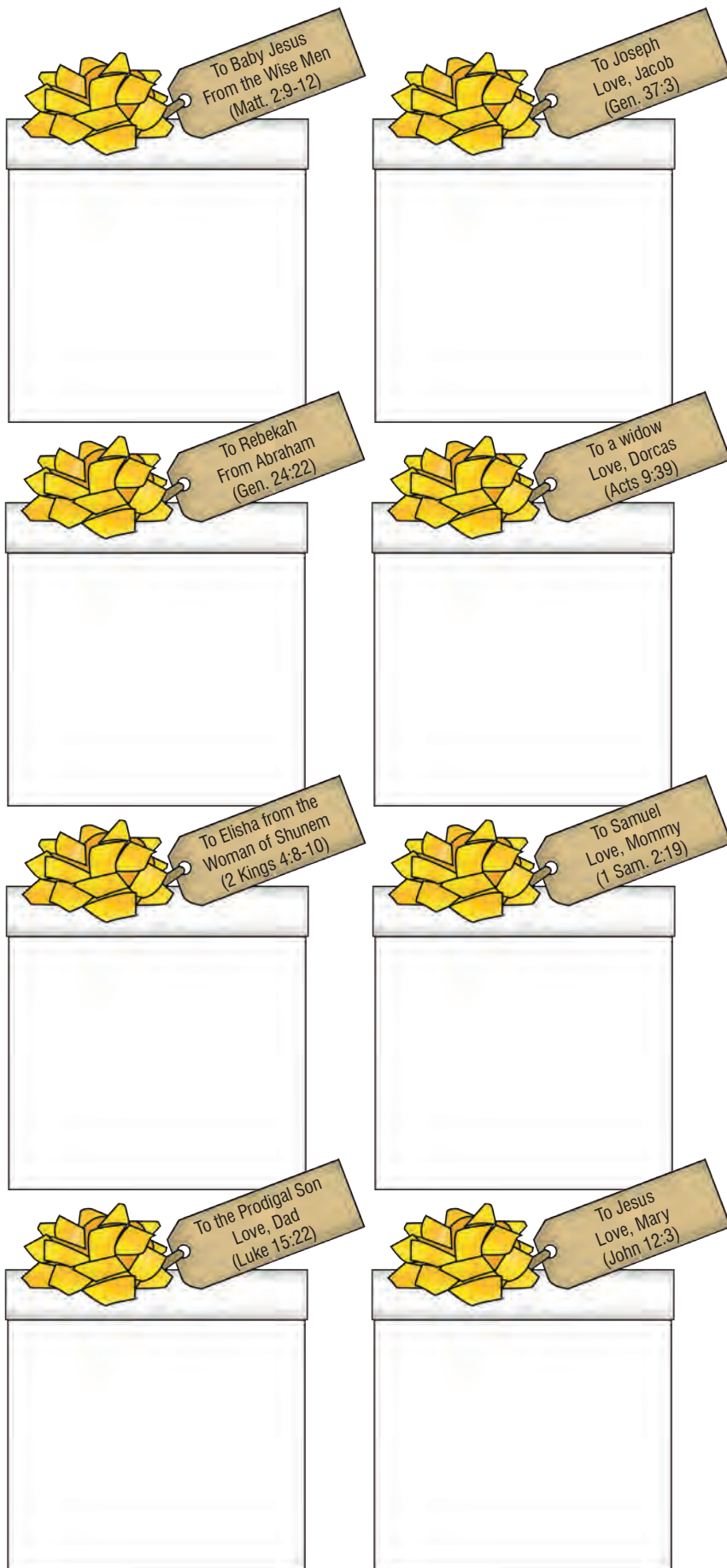


BIBLE PRESENTS

Look at the tags on the gifts below. Read the Bible verses. Draw a picture of each gift in its box, or write what the gift is instead. What do you think each giver was thinking and feeling when they gave these special gifts?

To David and your men
From Abigail
(1 Sam. 25:18, 23, 27)

To Adam and Eve
From God
(Gen. 1:29)



THE GIVING PROJECT

Giving is fun! Did you know that the happiest people in the world are not those who *have* the most but those who *give* the most away! Jesus created us to give, because sharing makes us happy. And other people are happy to receive a gift that shows how much we care.

Find a giving project that your family could do together. Some ideas:

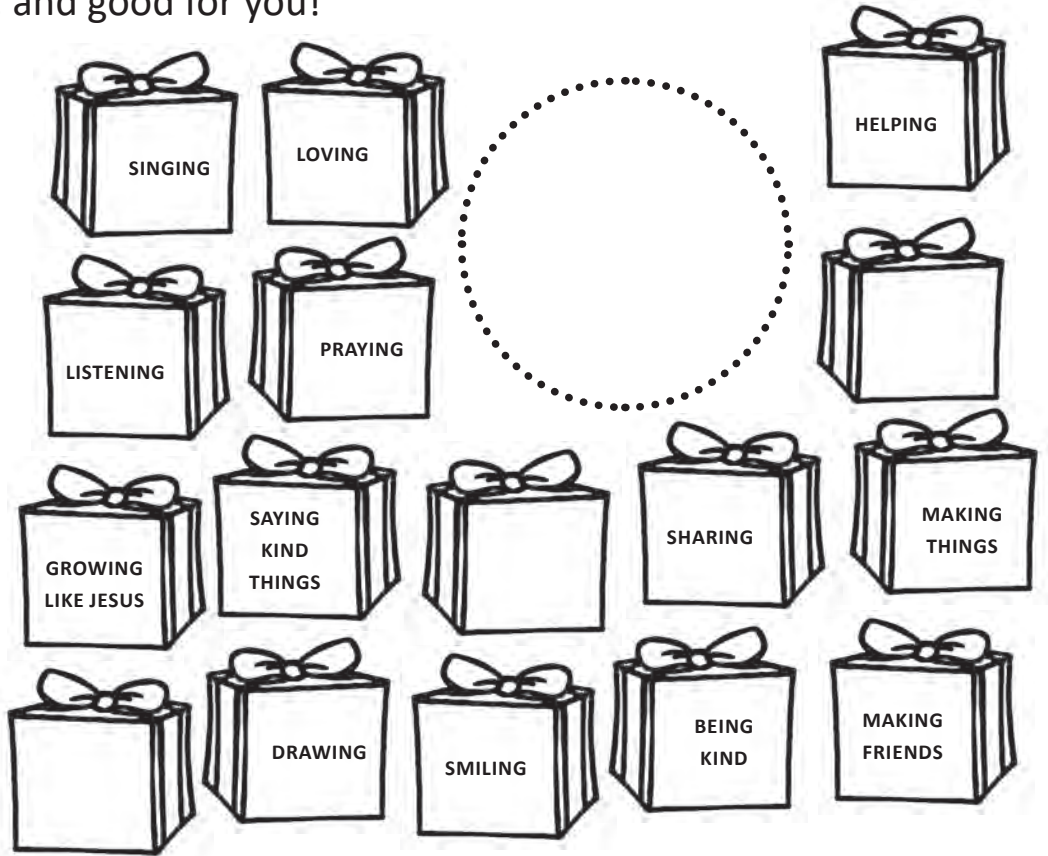
- The rice project at www.freerice.com. Every time you choose the right answer, rice is donated to hungry people. You don't even need any money!
- ADRA allows you to pack a virtual help box for a child and pay for it online. Find out how at www.kids.adra.org.
- Pay for a toilet in a poor village to keep children from getting sick. Learn more at www.toilettwinning.org.
- Make **care kits** for homeless people: warm socks, cereal bars, juice, soap, toothbrush, etc.
- Save up to buy a **brand new toy** to give to a needy or homeless child.
- Make **pretty calendars** with Bible verses and give them to seniors in a care home.
- Go without one item of **nonperishable food** for one day (or week) and donate that item to a food bank in your area.

Giving is fun . . . and good for you!

GOD'S GIFTS TO YOU!

God has given you some special gifts to help you share His love!

1. Draw a picture of yourself inside this circle, or write your name instead.
2. Then draw a line from yourself to the gifts that you use to share God's love with others.
3. Write any other gifts He's given you inside the empty boxes.



WHAT CAN I GIVE?

Even if you don't have very much, you can still make simple gifts to share with others. Ask your parents to help you with these ideas:

Hand prayers: Draw around your hand. Color the shape and write a prayer on your hand. Cut it out and stick it onto a picture, or place it in an envelope. If someone is sick or far away, ask lots of people to make hand prayers to send.

Promise box: Find a pretty box or jar. Cut many slips of paper the same size. Write a Bible promise on each one (you can find lists of Bible promises on the Internet at www.biblepromises.org).

Calendar: Buy a calendar with blank spaces for your own pictures, or print a calendar with

spaces using a computer. Design a decorated Bible verse for each page in the calendar.

Helping money box: Decorate a simple, cylindrical food container that has a plastic lid. You can use recycled giftwrap or pictures cut from magazines. Ask an adult to cut a slit in the plastic lid for coins. Make a label asking people to donate money to help others.

Candle jar: Make a pretty candle lantern. Dilute white glue with a little water and use it to paste tissue paper shapes onto the outside of a clean, empty jar. You can make stained glass designs, cut special shapes, or stick stars onto the jar. When the glue is dry it will turn transparent, and you can add another layer of glue to protect your design. Put a battery-operated tea-light or small votive candle into the jar to make a lantern.

Trail mix: Combine your favorite ingredients to make a tasty jar of trail mix to give away. Or search the Internet for other foods and recipes that you can layer in jars.

Nature treasure chest: Decorate a sturdy gift box and line it with tissue. Place some lovely natural finds in the box, such as cones, seed pods, shells, stones, and bark. Make a label to stick inside the lid, saying, "Choose something from the box, explore it carefully, and list five wonderful things about it. Add other treasures to the box when you find them."

I-spy bottle: Find a clean, clear plastic bottle with a wide mouth. Drop a tiny plastic lamb into the bottle. Add 19 other tiny things that easily get lost, such as a penny, small ticket, paper clip, button, seed, etc. Almost fill the bottle with dry rice or other small grains. Shake the bottle and see how long it takes to find the lost sheep, or to find everything you've hidden in the bottle. Give this to a child as a travel toy. 7

Karen Holford loves finding fun things to give away!

GOD CARES FOR YOU

SOMETIMES LIFE IS difficult, and we can feel worried and afraid about many things. God cares about all our worries and fears. He tells us to trust Him with all the things that trouble us (1 Peter 5:7).



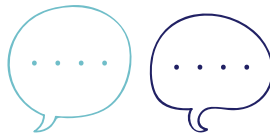
"IN GOD'S HANDS" PRAYER

Draw around an adult's hand on a piece of paper. Cut out the shape. Then write all your worries and fears on the hand. Pray about the things you have written on the hand and put them all into God's hands, because He cares for you. Sometimes there is nothing much we can do to make things better. But God is more than able and willing to take care of our problems and comfort our hearts.

CALMING PROMISES

The Bible is filled with verses that can help us trust in God and feel calm again. Look up the verses and choose your favorites. Make a small book by folding plain paper in half and stapling or stitching the pages together along the fold line. Write your favorite calming verses in the book and decorate each page. Make more little promise books to mail to friends and family far away or to give to people who are going through hard times.

- Deuteronomy 31:6
- Joshua 1:9
- Psalm 23:4
- Psalm 46:10
- Isaiah 40:31
- Isaiah 41:10
- Zephaniah 3:17
- Matthew 11:28-30
- John 14:27
- Romans 8:38, 39
- Philippians 4:6, 7
- 2 Thessalonians 3:16
- 1 Peter 5:7



CALMING STORIES

Ask some of the grown-ups around you how their faith has helped them in tough times. What do they do that calms their heart and reminds them that God is with them? Collect their stories and find a way to share them with others. How did listening to their stories inspire you and help your family to find ways to manage your own tough times?

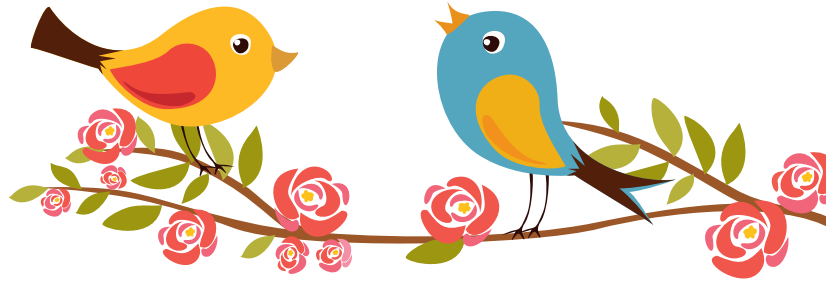


HAVE A HUG FROM GOD

God loves us so much! He notices every tear we cry, and He knows all about our worries. When you feel sad and anxious, ask your parent to wrap you up in a snug blanket and hold you against their chest. Then ask them to tell you that God loves you and He is giving you a big hug right now. Try to listen or feel for your parent's heartbeat and know that God's heart beats with love for you today. Being hugged calms us down and helps us to feel safe again. "Perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18).

Next ask your parent to say a blessing over you, just as Jesus blessed the little children when He was on earth (Luke 18:15-17). How does it feel to be blessed? What do you think it would have been like to have Jesus bless you? What do you think He would say to bless you if He were with you today?

What can you say to bless your parents? There are lots of blessings in the Bible. Search for them at the end of the epistles and scattered throughout the Bible. There is a famous and beautiful blessing in Numbers 6:22-27.



BIRDS AND FLOWERS

Wherever we live, we can usually find a small flower or bird to inspire us. Read Matthew 6:25-33. Watch a bird and see how freely it flies and sings, without any worries. Find a flower and look at its simple beauty. See how beautifully God has dressed it. Read the verses again. Talk about the following questions in your family—you'll all have different answers, and that's OK!

- What do you like best about these verses?
- What is the most important message in these verses for you?
- What do these verses tell you about God's loving care?
- What else can we learn about God's care for us by looking at the flowers and birds?
- What other things in nature show you that God cares for you?

CARE PACKAGE



Make a care package to share with someone going through a hard time. Wrap up tiny gifts and treats and write a tag for each item with an encouraging promise on it. Match a verse about being washed whiter than snow with a little soap or shower gel. Wrap something heart-shaped and add a verse about love. Include a blank thank-you card so they can make a list of things they want to thank God for and attach a verse about gratitude. Use a concordance or search on the internet to find Bible verses to match the gifts. Make a label for the package, inviting your friend to open a treat every time they need to feel God's love. Include a copy of the "Father's Love Letter" from www.fathersloveletter.com. This letter is based on lots of Bible verses and is available in more than 50 different languages.





JESUS PROTECTS HIS FRIENDS

Read the story of Jesus calming the storm. You can find the story in Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, and Luke 8:22-25. Act out the story with your family. Use a large piece of cloth, such as a sheet or tablecloth. Choose a blue cloth if you have one. For the boat, find an unbreakable toy boat, fold a paper boat, or cut a boat from cardboard. Place the boat in the center of the cloth and ask each person to hold onto the edges of the cloth. Retell the story in your own words. When the storm comes, ripple the cloth as hard as you can to make huge waves that toss the boat around. Then, when Jesus calms the storm, pull the cloth out as flat as possible to make the “water” still again. How does Jesus calm the storms in your life?



When your family is going through a hard time, or even when they aren't, you can fill your home with promises from God. Choose some Bible promises that encourage your family, write them out neatly, and decorate them. Then place them in the kitchen, by the front door, in the bedrooms, in the bathroom, and maybe even in the car! These will remind you of God's loving care and protection many times a day. Here are some suggestions:

- Kitchen/eating area—Matthew 6:25, 26
- Lounge/living room—Numbers 6:24-26
- Bathroom—Psalm 51:7
- Bedroom—Psalm 4:8
- Front door—Luke 10:5
- Car/garage—Deuteronomy 31:6

What other verses can you find that suit the rooms and places in your home? **7**

Karen Holford is the family ministries director of the Trans-European Division. She loves to look for all the ways God cares for her each day!



GOD CARES FOR YOUR FAMILY

Find a large gift bag or cover a box with paper like a present. Use sticky notes or stick squares of colored paper onto the bag or box with glue/paste/tape. On each sticky note or piece of paper write one way in which God has taken care of your family during the past week. Remember, these are just the ways you've noticed. He has done far more to care for you than you'll ever know! Let the youngest person in the family hold the box as you pray and thank God for caring for each of you.



God Loves Families!



ADVENTIST FAMILY MINISTRIES started exactly 100 years ago in 1919! So 2019 is a special year for thinking about families. It's a year to help make our families the best they can be! What will you do this year to grow closer as a family, and what will you do to help other families? What's special about your family? What do you do well?

OUR FAMILY IS ...!

Thank God for your family like this: Sit in a circle and take turns saying, "Thank You, God, for our family!"

We are [say something beginning with A] because [then describe why you chose that word]." So you might start with, "Thank You, God, for our family! We are amazing because You have made us!" "Thank You, God, for our family! We are blessed because You love us and because we love each other." Continue through the whole alphabet. Write down your ideas to keep as a special poster/poem/prayer describing your family.

FAMILY PORTRAIT

Take a fun photo of your family and put it in a frame that you can decorate. Choose a biblical blessing together and write it on the frame. Or adapt a verse, such as Philippians 1:9, and write, "May our love increase!" Talk about the blessing you have chosen and what it means.





FAMILY RULES!

Have you seen those signs that have a list of family rules? They say things such as, "In our family we help each other, we pray together, we laugh together, we say sorry, we forgive each other, and we never stop loving each other." Sit down with your family and decide on your top 10 family rules. Arrange them in the best order, and then make a poster out of them for your family room wall. Draw one yourself or use a computer to make a smart poster. Why not make extra copies and give them to other families you know?



PICTURE PRAYERS

Sit in a circle as a family and draw a simple picture of the person on your left. Put the person's name on the picture. Give the picture to the person you drew. Ask them to write their prayer requests and things they are thankful for around their picture. Continue passing the pictures around the circle, and write a short sentence prayer on each picture, especially about the person's prayer requests. Put the pictures where you will be reminded to pray for each other every day.

OUR NAME'S SPECIAL!

Many people in the Bible were given special names that meant something. Do you know what your family name (surname) means? Why not give your surname a new meaning? Take the letters of your name and make a sentence that praises God or that is a blessing on your family. Here's one for my family name (Holford): Honor Our Lord Forever, O Righteous Disciples!

ACROSTIC PSALM

Search for Bible verses, especially in Psalms, that begin with each letter of your family name. Then see if you can arrange them to make a beautiful-sounding psalm. If that's too hard, make up your own praise psalm where each verse begins with a different letter of your name.





FAMILIES JUST LIKE OURS ...

Find a family in the Bible that has something in common with your family. If you have moved lots of times, you might choose Abraham and Sarah's family. If you have lots of children in the family, you might choose Jacob's family. If you like animals or boats, you might choose Noah's family. Or if you have a grandparent living with you, you might choose Ruth and Boaz's family. Read a story about the family that's a bit like yours and respond to their story: create a play together, draw a picture, make a model, or even take some toy animals on a boat ride together!



JACOB'S FAMILY



EDIBLE FAMILY PICTURE

Make a portrait of your family using food. Bake gingerbread people and decorate them to look like you. Or use gingerbread cutters to cut out people-shaped sandwiches or pizza dough, and decorate them to look like you. Take a picture of your foodie family portrait, and then have fun eating all the edible people.



REACH IN

Invite another family from your church to share a simple meal in your home. Then have a happy and creative family worship together. Choose one of your favorite worship activities from these children's pages or from a previous issue of *The Journal*. Alternatively, choose a family worship activity that you could make into a mini-kit, complete with instructions and everything you need for the worship. Make these kits to give away to other families in your church or Sabbath School class. Encourage your church to start a family worship

library filled with ideas, worship kits to borrow, DVDs, Bible games, good Bible books for children, Bible character toys, and books about family worship.



REACH OUT

Choose a practical project that you and your family could do to bless a family in need. Go to the store together and buy them some delicious food (hint: try to find out what they like best!). Buy new gifts for the children and wrap them up. Donate some of your old clothes that are too small for you but are still good. Take the family out for a treat to a place they could never afford to go, such as a zoo, ice cream parlor, or pizza restaurant. **7**



Karen Holford loves having real fun with her three young grandchildren.



GOD Loves Me!



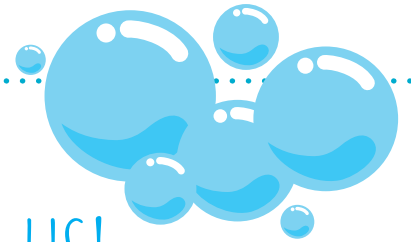
OUR FATHER GOD is so amazing, and He loves each one of us very much!
Let's explore some of the different ways He shows His love for us.



OUR LOVING FATHER GIVES US WONDERFUL GIFTS!

Read James 1:17. Every good gift we have in our lives comes from God's loving and generous hands! Wrap a box in sturdy paper and use tape to secure it. (You could also use a strong, plain gift bag or a plain sheet of paper.) With your family think of lots of good gifts God has given to you and write each gift on the box. He has given us more gifts than we can ever name or imagine! If you run out of space on one box, why not cover another box and keep writing more gifts and make a display of your gratitude?

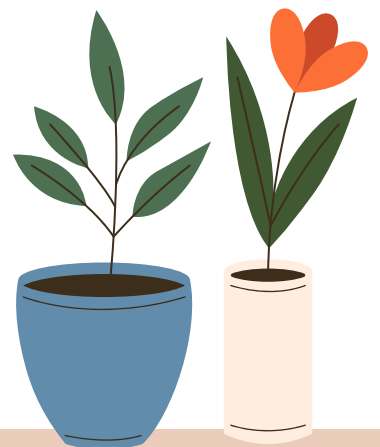
OUR LOVING FATHER FORGIVES US!



Read Psalm 103:3, 9-12. God doesn't want us to be discouraged and saddened when we make mistakes. He's already forgiven us completely through Jesus! He wipes all our sins away so completely that we can't find them ever again! Purchase water-soluble paper and write or draw your sins on the paper. Drop the paper into a bowl of water and watch it disappear. Or blow bubbles that will pop and disappear completely, just like your sins. Or fill a shallow tray or dish with salt or sand. Write your sins in the salt and then tilt and gently shake the dish until the words disappear. Or write them on a blackboard and wipe them away completely with a damp cloth. Just as you can never find the words again, your sins are wiped away forever.

GOD'S LOVE IS EVERYWHERE!

God's character is loving, kind, forgiving, compassionate, and hundreds of other good things! Send everyone in your home on a treasure hunt to find objects that remind them of God's goodness, love, and compassion. Gather your "treasures" together and tell each other why you chose those objects.





HUNT THE CROSSES

The shape of the cross is “hidden” in many things all around us, including windows, doors, furniture designs, trees, fences, signs, etc. Start looking for the shape of a cross when you walk along the way. Notice the reminders of Jesus “hiding” in full view. Take photos of them, or count them, and see how long it takes to find 100! It will probably be much quicker than you think once you start to look.

ALL KINDS OF LOVE

Gather craft materials or a basket of natural materials. You can use whatever you have. Ask each person to think of one way God loves us and then create a heart-shaped object that illustrates that kind of love. When you have all finished your hearts, see if you can guess what kind of God’s love is being illustrated by the different hearts. Gather them all together in a bowl of God’s love and add more hearts whenever you want to. Or make hearts of similar sizes that can be strung on a garland for your home or attached to a wreath.



A HEART FULL OF LOVE

Purchase a large heart-shaped bulletin board or cut a large heart out of paper or poster board. Decorate it and fill it with Bible verses about God’s love and pictures that illustrate His love. Read it whenever you need a hug from God and remember just how much He loves you!

I KNOW GOD LOVES ME BECAUSE . . .

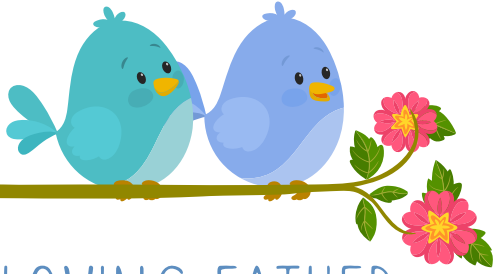
Play a game with your family. Sit in a circle and take turns saying, “I know God loves me because . . .” Complete the sentence simply. After the first person goes, the next person says, “I know God loves me because . . .” and then repeats the first person’s comment and adds a different one of their own. The third person repeats what the first and second people said, then adds another reason of their own. See how long you can make the list before someone breaks it! Help each other remember all the lovely comments because it’s wonderful to keep reminding each other of God’s love.



OUR LOVING FATHER IS ALWAYS WITH US

God says that He will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:8). God is always at your side, ready to help you, love you, take away your fears, and comfort you. Make something you can carry with you anytime to remind you that God is with you every moment of your life because He loves you. When I was a shy and frightened little girl, my mom stitched a heart-shaped button into my pockets as a reminder of her love and God’s love for me. Talk to your parents about what you could make or do.





OUR LOVING FATHER CARES FOR US

Jesus told us to look at the birds and flowers and to notice how much God cares for them (Matthew 6:25-34). We know that God loves us much more than the birds and flowers! With your family watch some birds. Look carefully at some different flowers growing near you. Talk about what you can learn about God's loving care for you from the way He cares for the birds and the flowers.



GOD'S LOVE GOES ON FOREVER!


Cut a long strip of strong paper from the biggest sheet of paper you can find. Make it about 4 centimeters (1½ inches) wide. Lay it on the floor, make one-half twist in the paper, and tape the twisted end to the other end, leaving the half twist in place. Put your strip on the table and write Bible verses about God's love on the strip until you reach the beginning again. You should discover that you have written on both sides of the strip and His love never ends! Hang the strip on a couple of pegs and crease it so it makes the shape of a heart.



CROWNED WITH BLESSINGS

When Jesus was baptized, God announced the blessing: "This is My Son. I love Him very much, and He brings me great joy!" God pronounces that blessing over all His children who choose to serve Him. Make a paper crown for each person in your family. Write the same blessing on each crown and insert the person's name. "This is my daughter, Lucy. I love her very much, and she brings me great joy!" Decorate the crowns and wear them together for your Friday evening meal and worship. How do the crowns change how you see yourself and the other people in your family?



Use your best craft materials to make a card for God to tell Him how much you love Him. He can see it and read it, and He will be delighted by it! Then make an imaginary card from God to you, telling you how much He loves you too! Read Psalm 145 and 1 Corinthians 13 to give you some ideas. Or read the children's letter from God at www.fathersloveletter.com. 

Karen Holford writes from England, where she never tires of learning more about God's love. It's always a joyful and magnificent adventure!

Growing Happy Children

By Kar En holf ord

if you ASK MoSt pARent S what they want for their children, it won't be long before someone mentions "happiness." Just as there are simple, basic principles for nurturing physically healthy children, there are also simple, basic principles for nurturing their emotional wellbeing. And the two go together—happy children are more likely to be healthy, and healthy children are more likely to be happy.

Happier students are more likely to believe they can learn new things, be creative, and do better in their studies. Happier people are more likely to get married, stay married, and have happy families. Happy people are more likely to do well at their jobs and help others. And happiness is an important part of a healthy Christian life. Paul was a wise psychologist when he told the Philippians to rejoice in all things and to focus on positive thoughts (Phil. 4:4-8).

Mana Gin G n EGativ E EMotions

Negative emotions are things that drain the happiness out of our lives, such as anger, contempt for others, disgust, embarrassment, fear, frustration, guilt, sadness, shame, or stress.



Here are some ways to help your children empty their emotional garbage bins every day so they aren't overwhelmed by their negative emotions:

Be a good role model. Show your child how you manage your own negative emotions. Let your children see and hear you pray for help with your own difficult feelings. Talk about what you are feeling and what you are doing to manage the feeling. "i'm really sad because someone was unkind to me at work, and that hurts. But i'm also remembering how kind most of the people are, and i'm going to bake a cake for everyone to share tomorrow."

It's very hard for children to deal with emotions they can't name. Help them by using feeling words to describe what they might be experiencing. "you must be so sad and disappointed that David wasn't able to come and play today." When they can use words to describe their feelings, their emotions are easier to manage.

if your child looks worried or distressed, invite them to talk and be ready to listen, to accept their feelings, and to let them know you understand and care. encourage them to pray about every worry they have because God cares about their concerns. once they feel understood and comforted, they'll find it easier to sort out their feelings and find healthy ways to manage them.



Acknowledge when your children manage their emotions well, and let them know you've noticed how brave they've been in a scary situation. This encourages them and lets them know when they're getting it right.

However understandable a child's difficult emotions might be, let them know when their behavior is inappropriate and help them find different ways to respond. "I know you're angry that Tom broke your toy by accident, but it's not OK to hit him. Let's go for a run to let off some steam!"

teach children to distract themselves when something's bothering them. Help them make a "busy box" full of interesting things to explore, or find a funny song they can sing. In *The Sound of Music*, Maria makes up a lovely song to distract herself from feeling afraid—"My Favorite Things."

Whatever you do, don't dismiss their negative feelings or tease them for being scared. Negative feelings are a normal response to a sinful world,

but the feelings are not necessarily sinful. God also feels sadness, anger, frustration, and disgust.

Encourage Positive Emotions

Positive emotions include laughter, wonder, thankfulness, joy, inspiration, interest, serenity, love, hope, and feeling valued.

you're the best teacher to help your children learn how to have happy and healthy emotions. So take care of your own needs and make sure that your children see you enjoying positive emotions. Talk openly about your happiness and gratitude. Thank God for the good things in your lives.

involve your children in being kind to others. Being kind is one of the best ways for children to experience positive emotions.

Laugh before learning! Having a moment of fun before trying to learn a new skill actually relaxes and opens the mind to make learning easier. talk together about what went well during the day and why it went so well. Remember the happy and good things that have happened to your family, such as answered prayers, God's guidance, and His provision.

Growing Happy children



children need space to be quiet and still. Don't overfill their time with activities. Help them find a "peaceful place" where they can think and pray. Help your children experience God's love, acceptance, and forgiveness through the way you love, accept, and forgive them. encourage children's *efforts* rather than their achievements to keep them working and motivated.

Keep a gratitude diary and write down what you're thankful for as a family. inspire your children by reading and watching true stories of people who excel in their field and by talking about how hard they have worked to reach their goals. use some of these ideas to start small traditions in your home that will help to nurture positive emotions on a daily basis. the happier they are, the easier it will be for them to love, learn, trust, and obey. 7

Karen Holford is a family therapist living in Scotland, where her husband is the mission president.

hEalthy, hAPPy EMotions	Bri Ef dEscri Ption and BiBlE vEr sE
Awe and wonder	encountering God. A sense of wonder about something beautiful in nature. Ps. 139:13, 14
Laughter/ amusement	Laughing and smiling at something unexpected, positive, unusual, and safe. pr. 17:22; eccl. 3:1, 4
t hankfulness	Sincere appreciation for the good gifts that God and others give us. 1 t hess. 5:18
Hope	The belief that things will change and improve. Jer. 29:11
Inspiration	Being inspired by God and the wonder of His works. Recognizing excellence in others and being inspired to pursue excellence. ps. 104
Joy	A feeling of pure and happy delight. pr. 15:13
interest	Being intrigued or challenged by something new. Wanting to explore and discover new things. eccl. 1:13
feeling valued	Having your efforts noticed and valued by others. Healthy satisfaction in a job well done. Eccl. 9:10; Col. 3:23
Serenity	Feeling peaceful, still, calm, and contented. John 14:27; 1 John 4:18
Love	A blend of positive emotions experienced within a warm, close, safe, and caring relationship. 1 Cor. 13:4-8

Married to a pastor?

Fellowship with others on
Facebook and Twitter!

discuss . share . connect

Official groups for Ministry Spouses online:
Twitter @ministryspouses
www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses



Happy to Serve

HAVING A HEART LIKE JESUS

It's really important for a Christian to have a heart like Jesus. Lots of people are greedy, proud, and want their own way all the time. But Jesus said that's not the way to be happy at all, and those people will end up feeling lonely and miserable. Jesus knows that we're happiest when we serve others first, just as He did.

HAPPY TO SERVE!

Many famous people in the Bible served others cheerfully, lovingly, and generously. Read their stories, find out what they did, and discover how they blessed others by their simple, kind actions. To find some of the answers, you might have to read farther than the verses listed.

PEOPLE WITH SERVING HEARTS	HOW THEY SERVED OTHERS	HOW THEIR KIND ACTIONS BLESSED OTHERS
Samuel 1 Samuel 3		
Naaman's maid 2 Kings 5:1-19		
Moses Exodus 2:16-24		
Joseph Genesis 39:1-6		
Abigail 1 Samuel 25:2-42		
Onesimus Philemon 1-22		
Mary of Bethany John 12:1-8		
Jesus John 13:1-17		

Which one of these characters would you most like to be?

What do you do to serve others?

What effects do your simple, humble actions have on the people around you, such as your family, teachers, and friends?



HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

CREATIVE SPACE!

Design a pin/badge that says, "How can I help you?" Draw your design neatly on a circle of cardstock and tape a safety pin to the back. Wear it and see what happens. Write down what you do and how it makes people happy.

OR

Make some colorful signs for your home. Choose from these phrases, or make up your own phrase to encourage service to others:

Whenever I do the smallest thing for someone else, I am really doing it for Jesus.

What can I do today to show someone how much Jesus loves them?

What can I do to be kind to a lonely person today?

What's the best thing I could do to help my mom or dad today?

SECRET SERVICE

Experimenters try out different things, sometimes secretly, and then watch carefully to see what happens. Why don't you experiment to discover the unexpected joy that results from serving others?

Make a list of things you could do simply and safely to serve others in your home, just as Jesus did. Then do them secretly.

After completing your Secret Service, write what happened in your secret notebook:

- What I did . . .
- Who noticed first?
- What did they say?
- What did they do?
- What do I think they were feeling?
- What effect did this have on my family?
- When I was doing my Secret Service, I felt . . .
- The next Secret Service I plan to do is . . .



SOME SECRET SERVICE IDEAS:

- Make someone a drink
- Make someone's bed
- Clean their shoes
- Clean the bath or shower
- Sweep or vacuum the floor
- Tidy up someone else's things
- Do someone's chores as a surprise
- Empty the garbage with a cheerful smile on your face
- Mow the lawn
- Clean up after a pet
- Feed your pet



PRAYER FOR PUTTING OTHERS FIRST

Cut out a white paper heart and write a prayer on it.

- Thank Jesus for loving you and for putting you first by dying to save you.
- Thank Jesus for making you feel so special deep inside that you don't have to brag to feel good.
- Ask Jesus to help you have a heart like His and put other people first.
- Ask Him to help you be happy with just who you are, so you don't have to act proud or push yourself to the top.


YOU FIRST!

Jesus told His disciples to be content with being at the end of the line or at the far end of the table. He said we don't have to push ourselves forward or be first all the time, because He's taking care of us. We're always special to Him.

When we put others down, we all feel unhappy. But when we give them a boost, we all feel happier.

Think about these different situations. What could you do to put the other person's needs first, rather than your own? What would Jesus do?

- Your friend badly wanted to win a class prize, but someone else won first place, and you won second. What kind words could you say to your disappointed friend, and what could you say to the person who won?
- **Your mom is really busy and asks you to help with a messy job that you don't like. What can you say and do to help her feel happy?**
- Your little sister is being teased at school. What could you say to help her feel happy, and what could you say to the bully?

- You are waiting in a line at a potluck, but a very hungry and miserable little boy is standing behind you. What could you do and say?
- Mom has made your favorite dessert. Everyone has had a piece, with one piece left over. You really want it, but so does your sister. What can you do?
- You are playing in the park and waiting for a turn on your favorite swing. A younger child also wants a turn on that swing. What can you do and say? 

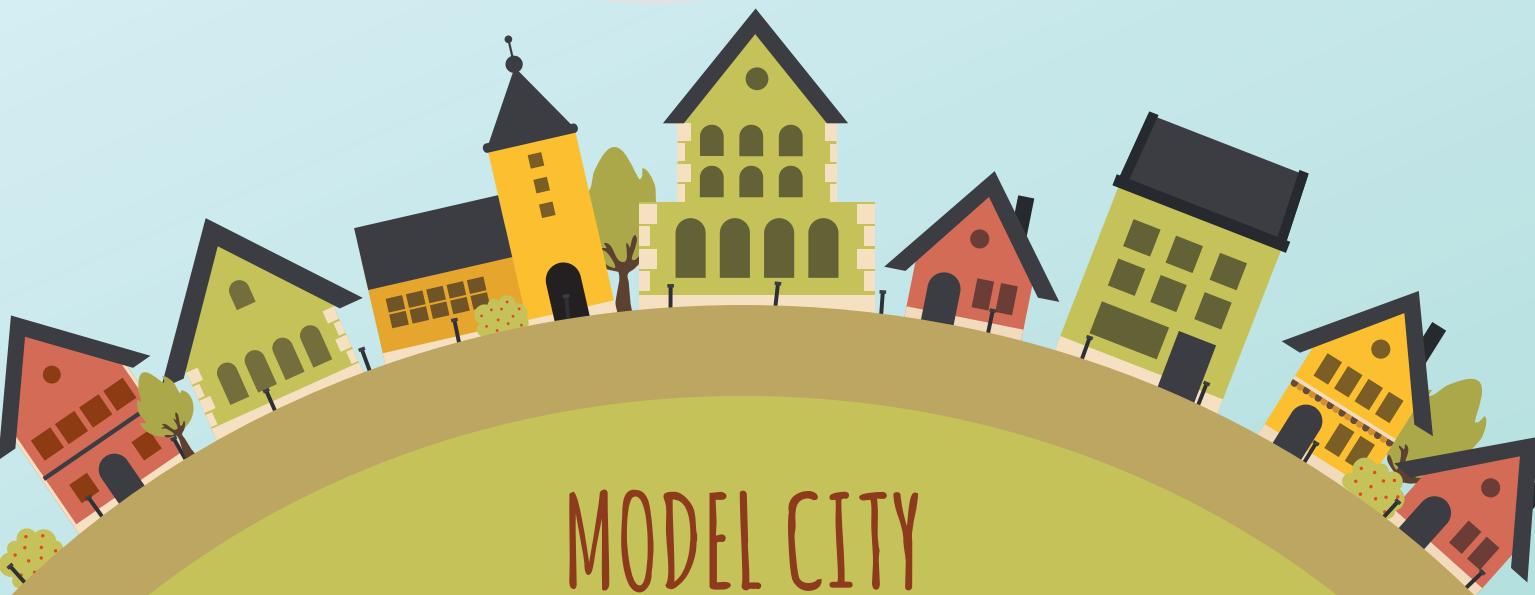
Karen Holford writes creative worships for children from her home on a Scottish hillside.



Heavenly!

I'm really looking forward to heaven, aren't you? I can't wait to be with Jesus! I plan to learn so much about God and explore the whole universe with Him. I want to live in a place where no one will ever be sad or lonely or sick or tired!

What about you? What do you think heaven will be like? Here are some heavenly worship activities to share with your family.



MODEL CITY

Design a heavenly city.

- Use a large sheet of paper. Or use old wallpaper and stick two strips together to make an extra-big square.
- Mark three gates on each side of the square—you'll have twelve gates. Draw straight roads across the paper to join the opposite gates and create a grid. Use this road map to make a layout for your heavenly city.
- Involve the whole family in making or drawing houses, parks, golden streets, pearly gates, and walls of precious stone. Use papers, sparkly scraps, toy bricks, and boxes from your recycling bin to build your amazing heavenly city.
- Why not send us a photo of your heavenly city? We'd love to see it!

A ROOM FOR YOU!



Read John 14:1-3. Jesus is making a room for you in heaven!

- Take an old shoebox and make a model of the room that Jesus is getting ready for you in heaven. Make furniture from scraps of paper and cardboard.
- What will the walls look like? What furniture might you need? What do you have in your bedroom right now that you won't need in heaven?
- If you don't want to build a model, draw a picture instead.
- Jesus is preparing a special place for you in heaven. What are you doing to prepare for heaven? Remember how much He loves you and looks forward to seeing you!

WONDERING . . .

Read Revelation 21:1 to 22:5 from your favorite Bible version. Then wonder about these questions together:

- What do you like best about this picture of heaven?
- What do you most look forward to in heaven?
- What do you think is the most important thing about going to heaven?
- How does this Bible picture of heaven help you understand God's love for you?

YOU'RE INVITED!

Jesus has invited us to live in heaven with Him. It will be way better than the most amazing party and praise time you can ever imagine.

- Design an invitation from Jesus asking you to come live in heaven with Him.
- Make it look really heavenly and choose your best craft materials.
- Make a special invitation and give it to someone who doesn't know that Jesus has invited them to heaven.



BUILD A VERSE!

Make a game to help you learn John 14:2-3.

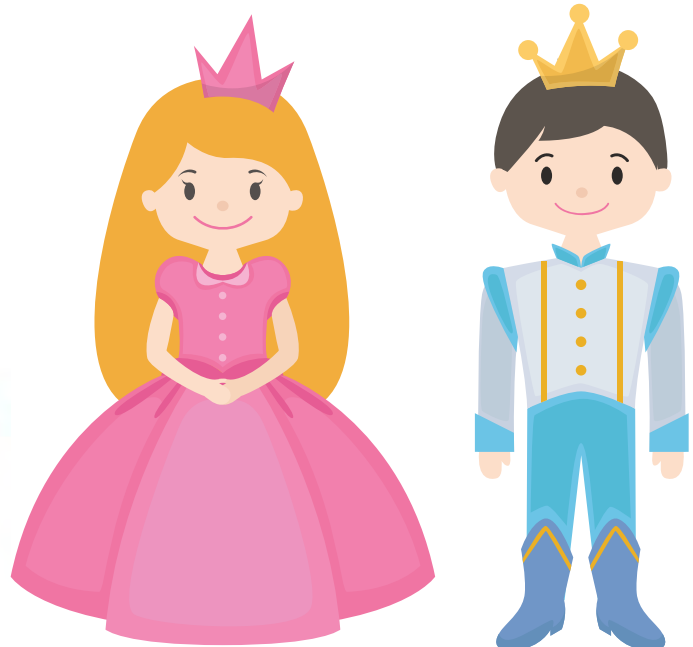
- Ask your parents to help you find a wipe-off marker.
- Write each word of these Bible verses on separate plastic building bricks (such as Legos).
- Then place the bricks in the right order to build a wall out of the verse. Hold the bricks carefully so you don't rub the words off before you start.
- Each time you read the verses aloud, rub off one or two more words until you have wiped off all the words and the bricks are clean. By that time you'll know these amazing verses by heart.
- If you don't have toy bricks or wipe-off markers, cut rectangles from paper or thin cardstock. Write one word on each rectangle, and lay them in order to make the Bible verses. Each time you read the verses, turn a few cards upside down. Repeat the verses until you can say them perfectly without seeing any words at all.



PRINCES AND PRINCESSES

You are a child of God, the King of the Universe! That makes you a prince or princess!

- Ask a grown-up to help you make a cardboard crown to wear.
- Write on the crown "I am a child of God." Then decorate the crown with stickers, gems, or markers.
- Wear your crown and do something kind for someone in your home, just like a heavenly prince or princess.
- Or make a sign to stick on your mirror or bedroom door to remind you that you're a child of God.
- What do you think the princes and princesses of heaven might do each day?





HEAVEN ON EARTH

Talk with your family about how wonderful heaven will be.

- What do you think you'll do in heaven? Plan a whole heavenly day together.
- What could you do as a family to make earth more like a little piece of heaven? Make a list of ideas and see how many you can do in a week.

PRAYER PICTURE

Whom would you like to see in heaven?

- Draw a picture of heaven. Include your family and any other people you especially want to see there.
- Gather your family in a circle around your picture and pray that each person in the picture will be in heaven.
- Keep your picture as a reminder to pray for the special people in your life.

IMAGINE . . .

Find a quiet place and imagine you're sitting on Jesus' lap, just like the children in the Bible. Imagine you're snuggling into His chest and He's hugging you and smiling at you and telling you amazing stories.

- What would you like to say to Jesus? What questions would you like to ask Him, and what would you most like to thank Him for?
- What do you think Jesus would like to say to you? "I love you!" "I made you special!" "I'm so glad you're My child!" What else might He say to encourage you? 7

Karen Holford writes from Scotland. She's looking forward to living with Jesus and learning even more about God's amazing love for us.





I Will Go Too!

OUR CHURCH HAS ALWAYS been looking for ways to tell other people the good news about Jesus' love. For the next few years, everyone, young and old, is helping to share the love and joy of being friends with Jesus. And that includes you! Here are some simple ideas for sharing God's love with those around you.



BEFORE YOU GO

Before we tell other people how much Jesus loves them, we have to feel His love for ourselves. Learn as much as you can about Jesus' love. Read Psalm 23, Psalm 103, 1 Corinthians 13, and Ephesians 3:14-21 to discover lots of ways that Jesus loves you! Write down everything you have learned about His love. Go for a scavenger hunt in your home and find 10 things that remind you of God's love. Tell each other why you chose those objects. Every day when you eat together, talk about where you saw God's love today and how you shared His love with others through your kind actions and words.

LOVING EYES

Learn to look at people the way Jesus did, through His loving eyes. Fold a piece of cardstock or paper in half. Draw half a heart shape (as big as possible) on the card so that the folded edge will be the center of the heart. Keep the card folded, and cut along the line you have drawn to make a heart. Still keeping the card folded, cut a much smaller heart shape inside the large heart shape to make a heart-shaped frame. Write the words of 1 John 4:19 around the edge of the heart frame. Look through this heart shape at the people around you and think about how much God loves each person. It will help you to share Jesus' love with them.



PRAYING FOR YOUR FRIENDS

Cut out another large heart shape. Write on this heart all the names of the people you are telling about Jesus' love. Use this as a reminder to pray for them every day.



LIGHT

Jesus is the light of the world, but He also told us that we are the light of the world. Now that Jesus is in heaven, He wants us to show people what He is like by being filled with the fruit of the Spirit and being loving, cheerful, peaceful, gentle, kind, etc. Read John 1:1-12; John 8:12; Matthew 5:14-15; and Galatians 5:22, 23. Go around your house together as a family, looking for the different kinds of lights in your home. Whenever you find a light, talk about how this light is like the light of Jesus, and think of ways that you could be this kind of light in the world. You will find lights to show the way, lights to make you feel happy, lights that show when something is switched on, and lights that tell you something important. What other lights can you find?



POSTCARD PRAYERS

Purchase some blank postcards or cut cardstock into postcard-sized pieces. Write a short, caring prayer on one side of the card and decorate the picture side to show something of God's love. Mail the postcards to people who are sick or living alone.



FILM NIGHT

Choose your favorite Christian movie or film series and invite a family to watch it with you. Make some healthy snacks to eat as you watch. Also, think of some good questions to start an inspiring discussion afterward.

CHALK MESSAGES

Think of a happy and encouraging Bible verse that would make your neighbors smile and feel loved. Use your colored sidewalk chalk to write and decorate your message on the sidewalk, driveway, or wall. Write a different message each week, or when one fades away, so that people look forward to what you'll write next.



LIGHT WINDOWS

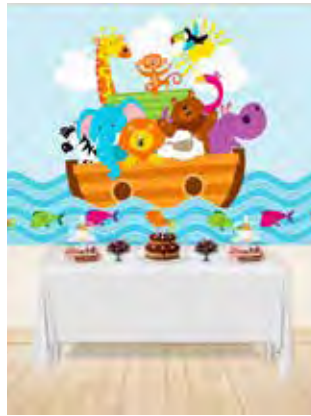
If people passing your home can see your windows, try making a light window. Take a large sheet of black cardstock, big enough to fill the window. Choose a short and simple message to encourage your neighbors. Print out block letters on a computer or practice your design on scrap paper. Ask a parent to help you cut the letters out of your black "window" so that they can be clearly seen. Cut other shapes into the cardstock, such as hearts or stars. Stick colored tissue paper behind the cut-out shapes to make a stained-glass window effect. Then tape this in your front window. Keep the light on at night to share your bright and hopeful message with people who pass by. Why not involve your whole church? Look at some projects and examples to inspire you at stthomascrookes.org/streetsoflight/.





WORSHIP INVITATION

Choose your favorite family worship activity, one that your friends would enjoy. Invite them to come to your home for a meal, and then do the worship activity afterward. Or invite them for a picnic, talk about God's amazing creation, and have a scavenger hunt looking for examples of things He made each day. Try to find something black and white for the first day and something blue for the firmament and water, or white and fluffy for clouds for the second day, etc.



BRILLIANT BIRTHDAYS

Invite your friends to a birthday party that shares your faith in a fun way! Choose a theme like "Creation" or "Noah's Ark." Design a cake, play games that show parts of the story, and give away little gifts or books related to the story.



NEIGHBORHOOD KINDNESS

One family walks up and down their street each week, praying for the people who live there. Every couple of months they visit every home with a themed treat: heart-shaped cookies and messages of love in February; a small bunch of homegrown flowers in April with a song of praise for creation; strawberries in June; home-baked bread rolls in September; a thanksgiving gift in October/November; and homemade candle lanterns in December with a special song. Their neighbors look forward to their visits, and they come and talk to this family when life is difficult or when they need prayer. The family has even started a little Bible study group around the kitchen table. What could you do to share kindness and Jesus with your neighbors?



LIGHT STONES

Share God's love with others by painting stones with cheerful, loving messages and Bible verses. After they have been painted, coat them with a waterproof seal to protect the design.

Then hide them in places where people will find them, or gift wrap them with a tag that reads, "This is a gift. Keep it for yourself or pass it on to share a smile with someone else." See thekindnessrocksproject.com.

T-SHIRTS THAT SPEAK

Purchase or design your own T-shirts that share God's love. If you have access to the internet, look at some witness T-shirts to give you some creative ideas. Use fabric pens or your printer and special iron-on transfer paper to make your shirts. Always reverse print your design so that it is the right way around when you iron it onto the fabric. ■

Karen Holford is the family ministries director for the Trans-European Division.

I'm Sorry . . .

WE ALL MESS UP AND MAKE MISTAKES. IT'S PART OF BEING HUMAN, AND IT DOESN'T FEEL VERY GOOD. BUT GOD LOVES US SO MUCH THAT HE'S MADE A SPECIAL WAY FOR US TO SAY WE'RE SORRY FOR OUR SINS AND MISTAKES—THEN THEY WON'T MAKE US FEEL BAD ANYMORE!

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO EXPLORE GOD'S AMAZING FORGIVENESS:

DISAPPEARING BUBBLES

Get a bottle of bubbles with a bubble wand. Think of something you want to say you're sorry for and ask God's forgiveness. Blow some bubbles, then close your eyes and pray. When you open your eyes, after praying for forgiveness, the bubbles will be all gone—just like your sins! They can never again be found or put back into the bottle.

CHANGE OF HEART

Take a handful of white playdough (or any other white modeling material or salt-dough). Shape it into something that represents what you want to say sorry to God for. Make the shape of your mouth if you find yourself saying wrong things! When you have made your model, shut your eyes and pray, telling God you're sorry and asking for His forgiveness. As you pray, squash your model into a ball shape and then form it into a heart. Open your eyes at the end of your prayer. Make your heart into a better shape if it needs adjusting. Let your heart dry out, and keep it to remind you that God can make your heart white and clean again—no matter what you have done.



FORGIVENESS COLORS

Make a forgiveness booklet, or perhaps a strand of beads or buttons attached to a red heart bookmark. Use the following colors to remind you of God's forgiveness:

- Green: God wants us to be filled with life.
- White: God knows we are happiest when we are free from sin and forgiven.
- Black or speckled: But we mess up and make mistakes and sin.
- Red: So God sent Jesus to die for us because He loves us.
- White: Because Jesus has died for our sins and taken them all away, we can be clean and forgiven again.
- Gold: One day He will come back to take us to live in heaven forever!

Use the booklet, beads, or buttons to tell someone else about the amazing gift of God's forgiveness.

CLEAN STONES

Find some big white stones and make them as muddy as you can. Let the mud dry on them. When you are ready, read 1 John 1:9. Tell God what you are sorry about, and then wash your stone clean in some warm water. You may need to use a scrubbing brush! Use this to remind you that God wants to wash you all clean again and make you white and sparkling like the stone. If your stone is big enough, write a Bible verse about forgiveness on it.



I'm Sorry . . .

SACK OF SINS

Take a strong bag and go to a safe place with your parents where there are lots of small rocks or logs. Think of some things you have done wrong in the past week, and put one rock or log in your sack for each thing you can think of. Pick up the sack and feel how heavy it is. You probably wouldn't want to carry that very far! But try to carry the sack for a little ways. Then empty out the rocks or logs and lay them out in the shape of a cross. Kneel and thank God for His forgiveness. Feel how light your sack is now! Run and jump and feel how free it is to be forgiven and loved by God!



F _____
O _____
R _____
G _____
I _____
V _____
E _____
N _____
E _____
S _____
S _____

FORGIVENESS POEM

Write the letters of the word FORGIVENESS down the side of a sheet of paper, one letter to a line. Then write words and phrases about forgiveness beginning with each of the letters. For example:

"F: Freed by Jesus because He loves us!"

"O: Only by dying could He save us!"

Or you could write, "Free!" and "Overwhelming!"


Or you could see how many other words you could make out of the letters in the word FORGIVENESS.

HEART OF TEXTS

Cut a large heart out of white poster board. Find your favorite texts about forgiveness and write them all over the heart.



WIPE-AWAY WORDS

Learn your favorite verse about forgiveness by writing it on a white board with a dry-erase marker. Each time you say the verse, wipe away a few more words until they are all gone and you have learned the verse. Well done! 

Karen Holford is so glad that God keeps on forgiving her and wiping away all her sins!



Jesus and Me!

YOU CAN HAVE YOUR OWN special times with Jesus, all by yourself! Reading your Bible and exploring it creatively can help you become more like Him. You can spend time with God in many different ways. Pick your favorite ideas, read your favorite story, and get started!

PRAYERFUL READING

Whenever you read your Bible, ask the Holy Spirit to help you discover what He wants you to learn today. Read the story of the Good Samaritan and ask God how He wants you to be kind and caring toward others. Or read the parable of the Sower and the Seed and ask God how you can grow more like Him today. Write down any ideas that come to mind, and then put them into action.



WRITE YOUR OWN BOOK

Make a miniature book by folding and stapling paper together and writing the Bible story in your own words. Illustrate with your own pictures. Then read your story to someone in your family. Jesus told lots of stories called parables, and these are perfect for turning into mini-books. Make a whole collection of little Bible storybooks for a younger child.



NOISY STORIES

Read a Bible story and imagine all the sound effects in the story, such as sheep (*baa*), walking on stones (*crunch*), water (*splash*), eating (*yum, yum*), being filled with wonder (*wow!*), etc. Collect things to help you make the best sounds. Then tell the Bible story in your own words and add the sound effects to bring the story to life. Ask Mom or Dad to record your story. Share your recorded stories with your friends and family members through social media, or with your Sabbath School class. Try the story of Creation, Noah's ark, the lost sheep, Moses and the children of Israel escaping through the Red Sea, or the story of Jesus' birth.

POSTCARDS FROM THE PAST

Find some blank postcards or cut cardstock to the size of a postcard. Draw a picture from a Bible story on one side of the card. On the other side write a postcard-type message from one of the people in the Bible story. What do you think they learned about God in this story, and how might they write about their experience to one of their friends or family members?



THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION!



Read a Bible story, then answer the following questions for yourself. What did you like best about the story? What was the most important lesson in the story for you today? Which person in the story is most like you, or which part of the story is most about you? What did you learn about God's love for you in this story? You can ask these good questions about any Bible story. They help the story to come alive in your life, and they help you to understand how much God loves you.

GROWING GREAT!

Read a Bible story and list the character strengths of each person in the story. Character strengths are things like courage, wisdom, kindness, patience, generosity, gratitude, teamwork, perseverance, self-control, putting others first, and humility. Which of these character strengths would you like to grow in your life, and what will you do to practice those strengths today?



BE CREATIVE

After reading a Bible story, make anything you like as your response to the story. You can use craft materials, write a poem, or turn your favorite text into a poster. Making something or writing something down helps you to think about the story in a new way. It doesn't have to be perfect; just enjoy being creative.



PICK A VERSE

Choose a Bible verse that means something special to you. Write it down and decorate it. Put your finished creation where you will see it every day, and practice learning the verse.



OBJECT LESSONS

Read a Bible story or a chapter such as Psalm 23. Then find objects to illustrate the story, such as toy sheep, a glass of water, grass, a shepherd, a stick, a cup, etc. Lay them out in the order that they appear in the story. See if someone else in your family can guess which story the items illustrate.

LEAD FAMILY WORSHIP

Choose a Bible story and create a special family worship. Give each person a character from the story and ask them to describe what happened from their perspective, or how they felt about the experience. Ask them to search for objects from the story. Or ask, "What does this story tell you about God?"

STORIES FILLED WITH TREASURE

Jesus' stories are like treasure chests. Each time you read a parable there are new thoughts and ideas to be discovered. Read one of Jesus' parables and ask yourself what this story tells you about God, about you, about God's hopes for your life, and about His love for you. Draw a picture to represent each parable you read, and write a list of the "treasures" that you find in each story.




TROPHY TIME

Plan an award ceremony for your three favorite Bible characters. Design a trophy for each one out of recycled materials, or draw the trophies on paper. List the characters' greatest achievements on their trophies. Write an acceptance speech for each character, where they describe how God helped them to be a hero. Present the award ceremony to your family. How can you become more like these characters?

WISDOM FOR TODAY

Read a chapter of Proverbs. Some proverbs are funny, some sound really strange to us today, and some are filled with amazing wisdom for your life. Choose a proverb and find a way to share it with your family: draw a picture, create an arrangement of objects, practice a mime, or write out a new version of the proverb that makes it relevant to your life today.



Whenever you find an idea that helps you explore the Bible, why not tell your friends and classmates? Or the kids in your Sabbath School class? You might be able to do the activity together! 

Karen Holford is the family ministries director for the Trans-European Division, and she is passionate about the every-week evangelistic opportunities of intergenerational worship services. She is the author of the book Altogether Wonderful, available from Advent Source.



JESUS' SPECIAL Prayer



JESUS GAVE US AN AMAZING PRAYER (see Matthew 6:9-13)! When I was a child people said this prayer in a very boring way, and I didn't realize how wonderful it was until I was grown up. Now I really like saying it quietly to myself and thinking about the special meaning in each line. Here are a few things you can do to explore Jesus' special prayer.



Discover more about God's fatherly love. Read Psalm 23, Psalm 103, and 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and discover some of the many ways God loves you. Ask your family for their favorite verses about God's love too. God loves us in more ways than we can imagine. See how many you can find!

ALL ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

Jesus prayed His special prayer to help us understand how much God loves us.

Below you will find the lines of the prayer on the left and what they tell us about God's love on the right. But the right side has been jumbled up! Sort them out again by drawing lines between the words of the prayer and what they tell us about God's love.

JESUS' SPECIAL PRAYER (NKJV)

Our Father in heaven
 Hallowed be Your name
 Your kingdom come
 Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 Give us this day our daily bread
 And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
 And do not lead us into temptation
 But deliver us from the evil one
 For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever

WHAT IT TELLS US ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

God wants to be our King today and forever.
 God lovingly forgives us when we make mistakes, and we need to forgive others too.
 God lovingly helps us to make good choices when we are tempted to make bad ones.
 God lovingly protects us from Satan and his tricks.
 God loves us like the best Father ever.
 It's important for us to do what God knows is best for us, just like the angels do in heaven.
 God is holy, so we worship His name.
 God will always be our strong, glorious, and loving King.
 God lovingly provides everything we need.



A FATHER'S LOVE!

Make a simple card for your father, grandfather, or someone else you love.

Fold a piece of heavy paper or cardstock to make a card. Cut out a heart shape to fit on the front.

Make a horizontal fold across the heart just below the central dip in the top of the heart. Spread a thin layer of glue over the top section of the heart. Stick the top of the heart to the front of the card.

When the glue is dry, write on the front of the heart: "You show me God's love when you . . ." Then lift up the lower half of the heart and write something your father or grandfather does to show you God's love, such as "help me" or "forgive me" or "are kind to me."

Make sure your writing will be covered by the heart when you fold it down again. You can draw a very faint pencil line around the very edges of the paper heart to help you stay inside the shape. Erase the lines after you have written your message.

Write your name and a greeting inside the card. Then give it to the person as a surprise. You could make one for your mother or grandmother too!



HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

God has so many names! How many can you find? Write the letters of the alphabet down one side of a sheet of paper and see if you can discover at least one name of God beginning with each letter of the alphabet. If you can't find a name for one of the letters, find a word that describes God instead. Examples: A—Almighty, B—Bridegroom, C—Creator.

YOUR KINGDOM COME

Imagine a place where God is the King! In what ways would our world be different if everyone lived in a kingdom of peace and love and joy? Draw a picture or write the story of your day in a world where God is King and everything is perfect.

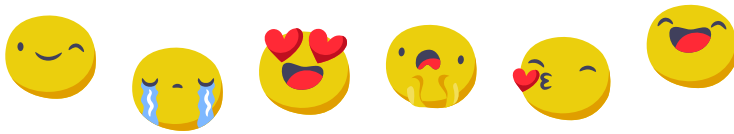
We want Jesus to come soon! Write a letter to Jesus telling Him why you want Him to come back soon. Or cut out a white paper cloud shape. Cut strips of paper in the colors of a rainbow and stick them to the back of the cloud so that the colored strips radiate out from the cloud. On each strip of paper write a Bible verse about Jesus coming back to take us to heaven.





YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

It's God's will that we love Him and love each other (Matthew 22:37, 38). Cut out a big paper heart. On one side write three ways that you could show God how much you love Him. On the other side write three ways that you could show lovingkindness to another person today. Do all the things you wrote down. Next to each thing you did, draw a face (emoticon) to show how you felt after each activity. How do you think God felt when you did these lovely things? And how do you think the people felt?



GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

Think about everything you have eaten in the past 24 hours and thank God for each thing you ate. Pray for the people who planted and harvested the food, packaged it, transported it, and sold it. Hundreds of people help to feed us every day!

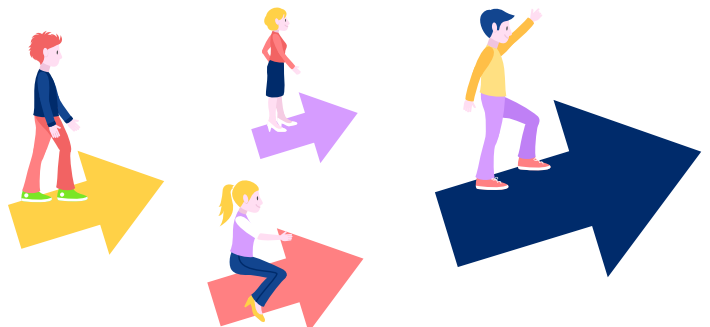
Help make some bread, crackers, healthful muffins, or biscuits. Take them to someone you know, and you will help God to provide their daily bread. Or make a food parcel with all the food a family needs for a whole day and leave it on the doorstep of a needy family.

FORGIVE US OUR SINS

Take a large, deep baking pan and half fill it with salt or very dry sand. Write what you have done wrong in the salt or sand, and then pray for God's forgiveness. Shake the pan from side to side as you pray or wipe your hand over the salt. When you open your eyes the sin will have disappeared into the salt and no one can ever find it again. Thank God for His amazing forgiveness!

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

God leads us away from temptation! Draw a signpost on a sheet of paper. Draw the tall post on the left side of the paper, and draw four to six arrows pointing to the right side, like a signpost on the road. What are some of your temptations? On each arrow write a Bible promise or verse that will help you to be strong when you are tempted. Ask your parents to help you find the verses. Then choose a few of these verses to memorize. Whenever you feel tempted, say one of these verses instead. That's exactly what Jesus did when Satan came to tempt Him in the wilderness.






PUT IT INTO ACTION!

Create actions for every line of Jesus' special prayer. He loves you so much, and He always wants to welcome you with open arms! Start your prayer by giving yourself a big hug from God as you say the words "Our Father," then point to heaven and just keep going. Teach your action prayer to your whole family. Watch me say this prayer with the actions our family uses. Go to www.youtube.com and search for "Hugging the Lord's Prayer with Karen Holford."



SCRAPBOOK YOUR PRAYER!

Make a scrapbook of Jesus' special prayer. This can be a fun Sabbath project for your whole family. Write each line of the prayer on a different page and decorate the page with pictures and words. You could stick pictures of children and fathers on the page that says "Our Father." Find pictures of food for "Give us this day our daily bread." Make the book in order to help your younger siblings learn the prayer. Or use it to journal your thoughts and ideas about this special prayer. 



Karen Holford loves having real fun with her three young grandchildren.

Just Good Friends

ONE OF THE BEST WAYS to share God's love is to be a great friend. Whenever we're kind to our friends, we're giving them a little taste of God's love, like a spoonful of the sweetest honey!



OUR BEST FRIEND EVER

If you want to know how to be a really good friend, find Psalm 103 with your family and read about God's amazing friendship with us.

Make a list of all the wonderful things God does to be our best friend. Start with the ideas you can find in this psalm, and then add any other things He does to make us feel happy, loved, and special.

Or write "GOD" in a heart in the middle of a large piece of paper. Around the edges write everything you can think of that describes God's friendship with us.

POSTCARD PRAYERS

Pray for your friends:

Find some blank postcards, or cut cardstock into rectangles.

Draw a picture of your friend on one side of the card. Decorate it with stickers too, if you like.

On the back of the card write a prayer for your friend, or write a list of things that you are praying about for that friend.

You could even ask your friend, "Is there anything special you'd like me to pray about for you, or is there anything that is worrying you?"

Pray for one of your friends every day, and write more prayer requests and answers to prayer on that friend's card.



LEARN A VERSE

Read Proverbs 17:17.

Draw a clock face on a paper plate. Write the numbers around the edge, and draw the hands at 9:15.

Write Proverbs 17:17 on the center of the plate.

Put your clock where it will remind you to be a good friend and to help your family members when they are going through a tough time.

FRIEND SKILLS

Cut out some paper people. Use a gingerbread cookie cutter, or find a pattern on the Internet.

Read Romans 12:9-21 and 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 to discover some of the things that help people to be good friends.

Write one idea on the front of each paper person, such as being patient, being kind, or comforting people who are sad.

On the back of each person write an example of how you could show patience, or be kind, or whatever you have written on the front. Ask your family to help you think of ideas too.

Which of these friend skills are you good at, and which ones do you find more difficult? What can you do to practice being an even better friend?



BIBLE FRIENDS

If you could be friends with anyone in the Bible (other than God and Jesus), whom would you choose?

Imagine you are writing a short letter to this Bible character. Tell them:

- How they have inspired you.
- Why you want to be their friend.
- One thing you would like to do with them if you could spend a day together.

Maybe you will meet them in heaven and you can be friends there!

POSTER PALS

Design a poster encouraging people to make new friends as a way of showing God's love to the world.





BETTER TOGETHER

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

Make a list of things that are much better to do with a friend than on your own.

Here are some ideas:

- Play hide-and-go-seek.
- Ride a teeter-totter (seesaw).
- Tell a joke!
- Play ball.

- Have a birthday party.
- Run a three-legged race.

Think about some people in the Bible who were friends: Ruth and Naomi, David and Jonathan, Daniel and his friends, Jesus and His disciples, Paul and Silas, etc. Find their stories in the Bible and see if you can guess what they liked doing together.

LOVE THE LONELY

Read the first part of Genesis 2:18. Even in the Garden of Eden it wasn't good for people to be alone.

Do you know someone who is lonely? Maybe it's the new girl in your class or the senior citizen who lives next door. Whenever you are having fun, look out for other children who might be lonely. Do whatever you can to include them or to make them feel happier. You never know—that lonely person may become the best friend you ever had!

Make a list of things you could do to help someone in your class feel less lonely:

- Smile.
- Say hello.
- Be kind and helpful.
- Offer to show them around if they are new and help them find things.
- Ask them about their hobbies or their favorite class in school.
- Play a game with them.
- Share your snacks with them.
- Invite them to your party.
- Ask them to come and play at your home.
- Invite them to something fun at your church or to go for a walk with your family on Sabbath afternoon.



JUST SAY IT

Find a good time to tell one of your friends, "I'm really happy you're my friend because _____." Or send them a card, text message, or email to let them know they are special to you.

RUTH AND NAOMI



The book of Ruth isn't very long, and it is a great story of two very different women who became best friends. Read it with your family. Then talk about these questions:

- What's your favorite part of this story?
- What's the most important message in this story for you?
- What does this story tell you about God's love?



TALK ABOUT FRIENDS

Read the different situations below and talk with your friends or family about what you could do to be a really good friend.

- Your friend is sad because his parents are separating and his dad is going to live a long way away. What could you do to be a good friend?
- A new girl in your church is sitting by herself. What could you do to be a good friend?
- You are having a birthday party. You could invite your special friends, but you want to be like Jesus and include some lonely children. What could you do to make them feel happy and included?
- One of your friends has started being unkind to another child in your class. It really bothers you. What can you do to help them stop their unkind behavior and be a good friend instead?
- Your family wants to make a difference and do a project for a group of lonely or sad children in your town. Find out about the children in your area who might be lonely (refugees, children with disabilities, children in the hospital, nearby children from other ministry families, children who are homeless, etc.) and think what you could do to make them feel happy and special.



FRIENDS SHOW GOD'S LOVE

Try this experiment every day for a month. Ask your family:

- Who was a kind friend and showed you God's love today?
- What did they do?
- How did it make you feel?
- How were you a kind friend today?
- What did you do to show God's love, and what difference did it make to you and the other person?

At the end of the experiment ask yourselves: "What have we learned this month about being good friends?" and "How am I a kinder and more caring friend than I was a month ago?"

MAKE IT

Find some of your favorite craft materials. Use them to make two reminders:



Karen Holford is really glad that a girl she hardly knew came and said, "I want to be your friend!" They are still best friends today, 30 years later!



Keep me
safe!

DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU'RE VERY PRECIOUS TO GOD? HE LOVES YOU SO MUCH, AND HE IS SAD WHEN PEOPLE HURT CHILDREN OR MAKE THEM FEEL AFRAID. HERE ARE SOME FAMILY WORSHIP ACTIVITIES AND THINGS TO DO AND TALK ABOUT THAT WILL HELP YOU LEARN ABOUT GOD'S PROTECTION. DISCOVER WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN YOU FEEL SCARED, AFRAID, OR HURT.

PROTECTION HUNT

- Go on a hunt around your house to find ten different items that help protect something else. A pillow protects your head when you sleep; an egg carton protects eggs; shoes protect your feet. Can you think of more?
- Read Psalm 91 together.
- Look at the objects you found on your hunt. Tell how each item helps you understand something special about God's protection for you.
- Pray together, praising God and thanking Him for all the ways He has protected you and your family in the past.





EGG CARTON PRAYER

- Find an egg carton with sections and a lid.
- Cut out one paper egg shape for each space in the box.
- Think about the people you know who need protecting, including yourself.
- Write a sentence prayer for protection on each egg shape.
- Decorate the box with pictures and Bible verses about God's protection.

Keep it in a safe place. Add other prayers for protection whenever you want.



THINK ABOUT IT:

- What are some Bible verses that help you when you feel afraid? Memorize them so they can encourage you.
- What can you do when you feel scared and need someone to protect you?
- Who would you tell if someone made you feel afraid?
- What would you do if someone hit you or hurt you?
- What would you do if someone made you feel afraid or sad and told you not to tell anyone else? (Tell someone anyway!)

I'M SCARED!

- As a child you need special protection. You need to know when people are doing things that are wrong or hurtful to you—and how to get help from safe people.
- It's wrong for anyone to hit you or say unkind things to you.
- It's wrong for people to make you feel afraid, to take away things you need, or to take things that are important to you.
- It's also wrong for people to touch your body in ways that make you feel uncomfortable.

Keep Me Safe!

BRAVE PROTECTORS

God used brave people to protect His friends down through the ages.

- Who did He help these people to protect?
- Match the protector to the person (or people) they helped to keep safe.
- Then write or tell how God helped them protect others.

PROTECTOR	WHO/WHAT THEY PROTECTED	HOW THEY DID IT
Rahab (Joshua 2)	His family	.....
Boaz (Ruth 2)	Joseph	.....
David (2 Samuel 9)	Fishermen in a storm	.....
Reuben (Genesis 37)	Spies	.....
Noah (Genesis 6)	Jesus	.....
Good Samaritan (Luke 10)	Sheep	.....
Esther (Esther 7)	Mephibosheth	.....
Jesus (Mark 4)	Ruth	.....
Joseph and Mary (Matthew 2)	Injured man	.....
The Good Shepherd (John 10)	Jewish nation	.....

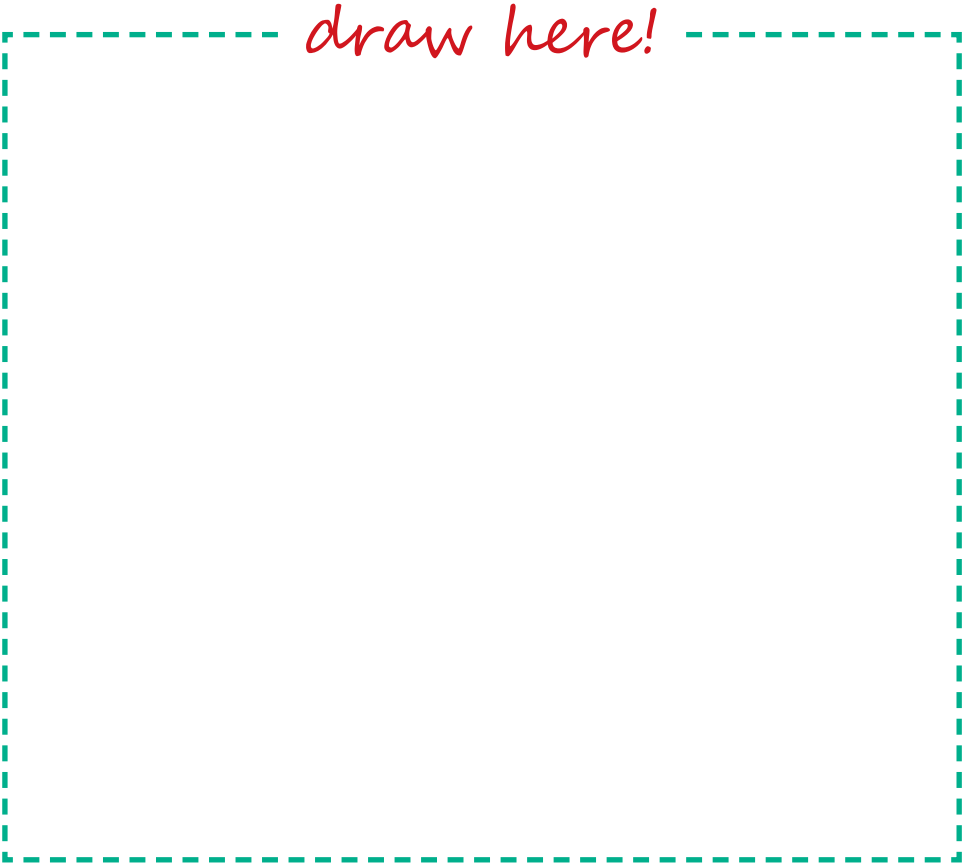
BE A PROTECTOR

You can be a protector too!

How can you help protect the following people and keep them safe?

Draw a picture of yourself helping each of these children, or write a list of things you could do to protect and help them.

- A baby brother or sister
- A friend who has fallen over and hurt their knee badly
- A child who is being teased or bullied by other children
- A child from another country who doesn't speak your language very well



HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO HELP YOU:

- Practice yelling “Stop!” and “Help!” so you can say it in an emergency.
- Pray to God for help and protection.
- Run away.
- Find someone safe to tell. Make a list of people who may be safe to tell, such as your parents, grandparents, teacher, doctor, or others.
- Ask the people who love you to help you.
- If someone doesn’t believe you or help you, don’t give up. Keep telling people until someone hears you and helps you.
- Talk with your parents about what to do if someone makes you feel scared, hurt, or sad.

JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

Jesus loved being with children! When the disciples tried to chase them away so He could rest, Jesus welcomed them with open arms. They sat on His lap while He told them wonderful stories. He put His hands on their heads and blessed them. He probably said something to each child to make them feel happy and loved.

Imagine that you went to see Jesus in a field or park near you. Draw a picture of yourself sitting on His lap or standing next to Him. What do you think He would say to you today to make you feel special? Write His message to you on your picture.

Remember that Jesus always cares about you and wants you to feel safe, happy, and loved. 7

Karen Holford loves to help children understand how much Jesus loves them.

Discover a safe place to fellowship, share support and explore the journey of ministry life.



Married to a pastor?

 [facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses)

 @ministryspouses

Kindness Counts



SALT AND LIGHT

Read Matthew 5:13-16. In these verses Jesus tells us that we are to be like light and salt.

When we are “light,” we help people to see what God is like. They notice our kind “good works” and give credit to God for them.

When we are “salt” and we mingle with people, we can help them to “taste” or experience what God is like.



YOU CAN SPREAD kindness and make friends for Jesus! One of the best ways is by being light and salt in the world.



CURIOUS SCAVENGERS

Go around your house with your family and look for different kinds of light. Then think of different ways you use salt.

Talk together about these different lights and uses of salt. How can they help you to understand more about sharing God’s loving-kindness with the people around you?

THE SALT LIGHT PROJECT

Starting your own SaltLight project is a fun way for you and your family to share Jesus’ loving-kindness with others!

Read the list of ideas below. Add other ideas of your own.

- Buy or print a calendar with a space for each day.
- Do the project as one family, or invite another family at church to join you. That way you can work together and reach your goals sooner.
- Decide how many of these activities your family, or group of families, could easily manage in a month. Then choose how you will celebrate when you reach your goal. Invite another family to join your celebration so you can share Jesus’ loving-kindness with them too.
- Every time you do something to share Jesus’ love, stick a gold star or a red heart on your calendar. When you have reached your goal, celebrate with your family. Then set a new target to reach.



“GOOD WORKS” LIST



• PRAY FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS.

- Smile at someone.
- Say hello to a neighbor and ask if there is anything you can do to help them.
- Help bake cookies. Then take them to a neighbor, police station, homeless shelter, women’s refuge, fire depot, etc.
- Offer to walk a neighbor’s dog.
- Tape dollar bills to toys in the dollar store.
- Write colorful, happy messages and Bible verses on paper. Tuck them into free newspapers.
- Write a happy message on a sticky note. Then hide it inside a book in the local library. Include some paper money to give someone a lovely surprise.
- Make encouraging bookmarks to hide inside library books.
- Pack up some of your good outgrown clothes, toys, and books. Take them to a Goodwill store or a women’s refuge.
- Invite a lonely child to play with you.

- Pick a bunch of flowers from your yard, or make pretty paper ones. Tie them with ribbon and hang them on someone’s front door.
- Use colorful chalk to write a happy message or Bible verse on a sidewalk.
- Without being asked, do something kind to help your teacher or parent.
- Tidy your bedroom.
- Go around your home and see how fast you can put everything back in its place, or deliver items to the correct room.
- Leave a thank-you note and treat in your mailbox for the mail carrier.



• PICK UP ONE PIECE OF SAFE LITTER FROM THE STREET AND PUT IT IN THE GARBAGE BIN.

- Feed the birds.





• **PLANT FLOWER SEEDS IN POTS AND CARE FOR THEM UNTIL THEY BLOOM. THEN TAKE THEM TO LONELY OR ELDERLY PEOPLE IN YOUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY.**

- Make thank-you cards for your Sabbath School teachers.
- Make “We’re praying for you!” cards to give to people going through tough times.
- Collect loose coins in your home. Use them to save up for a special caring project. Or buy a gift through ADRA to help a family in another part of the world (ADRA.org).



• **INVITE ANOTHER FAMILY TO YOUR HOME FOR POPCORN AND A GOOD MOVIE OR GAME.**

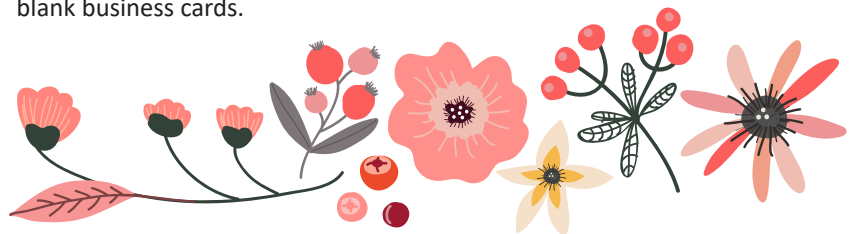
- Write out the instructions for some of your favorite family worships. Include any supplies that are needed. Give the family worship kits to other families in your church.

- Encourage your church to start their own “Messy Church” program to reach families in your community (messychurch.org.uk).
- Visit fathersloveletter.com. Print off the children’s version to share the good news of God’s loving-kindness with other children. You can also print the love letter in many different languages if you know people from other countries.
- Find inspirational video clips that help people to understand God’s loving-kindness and the good news of Jesus. Then share them on your family Facebook page or through other types of social media.

• **WRITE A HAPPY AND ENCOURAGING LETTER OR CARD AND SEND IT TO SOMEONE.**



- Look out for people who need help. Then encourage your family to help them.
- Start a family fund for helping others. Add a little bit of money every week, and think of fun and happy ways to share God’s love with others.
- Make Bible verse promise boxes or jars to give as gifts. Print out Bible verses or write them by hand on blank business cards.



- Buy a book of Christian coloring pages and separate the pages. Color them to give as encouraging gifts. Or visit your neighbors or a care home and let people choose the one they would most like to keep. You can also pay a small amount to download inspiring art to color from www.lindisfarne-scriptorium.co.uk.



• **ASK YOUR CHURCH TO INVEST IN A LARGE, COLORFUL PLAY PARACHUTE.**

Help your parents or children’s ministry leader to learn how to use the parachute to tell Bible stories, sing praise songs, learn Bible verses, and play Bible games. Take the parachute to use in a local park. Let other children in the park come and join you to learn about Jesus while they play (ministry-to-children.com/parachute-games/ and throughtheroof.org/innovative-parachute-resource-includes-all/).



• **DONATE COLORED PENCILS AND CHRISTIAN COLORING SHEETS TO WAITING AREAS AT CLINICS AND HOSPITALS, OR TAKE THEM WITH YOU TO SHARE WITH OTHER CHILDREN WHEN YOU ARE WAITING.**

- If your local library has Christian storybooks, borrow them, read them, and write a review for your library website or local bookstore.
- Be a junior journalist. Find out if your local paper will publish stories written by children. Then write about some of the good things that are happening at your church. Make sure you take some good photos to make your article more interesting.
- Some local papers offer to print free or low-cost messages at different times of the year, such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Use this opportunity to share messages of faith, hope, and love.
- Start a project in your church in which the children and young people interview the older people about their faith journeys. Write them down, or make video recordings of them to share with the whole church or to include on your church's website.

- Instead of Halloween, why not hold your own Christian, anti-Halloween Light Party and invite your friends? See lightparty.org for ideas.
- Invite each of your neighbors to your home for a simple soup supper so you can get to know them and their needs.



- **AT CHRISTMASTIME VISIT EACH OF YOUR NEIGHBORS AND SING CAROLS TO THEM. GIVE THEM A SMALL GIFT OF HOMEMADE COOKIES, A BASKET OF FRUIT, OR AN INSPIRING OUTREACH BOOK.**
- Start a children's choir or singing group. Practice until you are good enough to sing at a local mall, airport, or other public place.
- Discover the spiritual gifts of each person in your family. Find ways to use those special gifts to share Jesus' love.

CELEBRATION IDEAS

Once you've had fun spreading kindness, have a celebration with your family and anyone else who helped you! Here are some ideas for your celebration:

- Watch an inspiring movie together.
- Have a picnic in the park or in another beautiful place.



- **Go for a walk together. Ask one of your parents to plan a Bible treasure hunt or a nature scavenger hunt.**
- Make pizza together.
- Think of other things you enjoy doing with your friends.
- Tell us about it! Do you have a creative activity that your family has used to share God's loving-kindness? Please write and let us know.

Karen Holford is director of the Family Ministries Department for the Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



LET'S CARE FOR EACH OTHER

SCAN FOR AUDIO



THE CARING STRANGER

Read Luke 10:25–37.

Here are some things that the Good Samaritan did to help care for the injured man. They are all jumbled up. Some of them are not in the written story, but we know that he must have done them.

Draw a line starting with the first thing he did to care for the injured man (in red) to the second, the third, and all the way to the last one (in blue).

He believed that it was important for him to be kind and helpful to others.

He saw that the man was from a different country. But he didn't mind because caring for anyone in need is important.

He led his donkey very gently along the path to the next town.

He gave him water to drink.

He decided the injured man was too hurt to travel with him on a donkey.

He wanted to help the injured man.

He lifted the man onto his donkey even though it was difficult.

He took the man to the inn so that the man could rest in a quiet place.

He took care of the man's cuts and bruises.

He noticed an injured man by the road.

He came back and paid the innkeeper for looking after the injured man until he was better.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN ON THE PLAYGROUND



Imagine that the story of the Good Samaritan took place in your schoolyard or a park near you. Imagine you are the Good Samaritan in the story—the person who cares and helps. Tell the story of being a Good Samaritan, and then write, draw, or act it out with your family.

A child is bullied on the playground, and they fall and cut their knee (make sure no one gets really hurt!). The child is bleeding and sad. Who ignores the child? How do you notice them? What do you do to take care of them? And where will you take them to get the care and love they need? Who helps you to help the child?

LET'S CARE

Here are some situations when you might need some help and care. How would you like to be cared for when these things happen, and what do you think other children might like?



BE A SHEEP!

Read the story of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25:31–46.

Draw some fat and fluffy sheep shapes on paper and cut them out.

Draw a big heart on the back of each fluffy sheep.

Read the story and find out what the sheep did that was kind and caring (such as sharing food with a hungry person).

Write or draw one of these things inside each of the hearts on the sheep.

On the other side of each sheep, write the name of a person in the Bible who did kind things like these for others.

For example, Dorcas made clothes for people who needed them. Hannah made a little coat for Samuel each year. Then write how your family could share clothes with others too.

Make a garland, mobile, wreath, or poster with your sheep to remind everyone in your family to be kind.

A TIME WHEN YOU NEED CARE	What would you like others to do for you?	What might other children in this situation need you to do for them?
When you are in a new place and feel all alone		
When everyone is playing and you are left out		
When someone is teasing or bullying you		
When you've forgotten your lunchbox and you're hungry		
When you've fallen and you're bleeding and hurt		
When you made a mistake and people are laughing at you		
When all your friends are invited to a party and you are left out		



KINDNESS KIT

The Good Samaritan was ready to help! He had oil and bandages for the man's wounds. Make a kindness kit for your backpack or family car and a few extra kindness kits to give away! Include sticky bandages for cuts, paper handkerchiefs, cereal bars or healthy snacks, shoelaces, string, pencils, hand gel, smiley stickers, juice cartons, a pair of socks, and more. Keep everything tucked neatly into a zipper pouch or bag so that it is ready and safe when you need something to help someone.



MAKE A SCENE!



Use the toys you have, or use sticks, stones, sand, leaves, shells, and other natural materials to create the scenery for the story of the Good Samaritan.

Make some hills and a road from Jerusalem to Jericho.

Build a little inn for Jericho. Make sure it has a bed for the injured man to sleep on.

Make some rocks for the robbers to hide behind.

Find toys or twigs to represent the hurt man, two robbers, the priest, the Levite, the Good Samaritan, his donkey, and the innkeeper.

Now tell the story to your family using the scenery that you have made!

You could ask a parent to make a video of your story.

WHEN WE'VE HAD A TOUGH DAY ...



What do you do when you have had a sad or tiring day? What helps you feel better again? And what helps the other people in your family feel better when they have had a tough day? Make a chart like this to go on your fridge, or write it on a whiteboard or blackboard:

Name	My day was... (1 very tough – 5 very good)					This is how we can help each other feel better this evening . . .
	1	2	3	4	5	
Mommy						
Daddy						
Me						

Ideas to help each other might be:

- Say a short prayer for me
- Give me a big hug
- Listen to what happened to me
- Go for a peaceful stroll in nature with me
- Do something fun with me
- Help me by . . .
- Read a story with me
- Make my favorite drink or food
- Have worship / read the Sabbath School lesson together
- Play a game together
- Kick a ball together
- Make something beautiful
- Watch a video of funny or interesting animals that care for each other, like dolphins, sea-otters, meerkats, and monkeys
- Remind me how much God loves me

KINDNESS IN CHURCH

Is there someone in your church who needs help? What can your family do to make their life happier or more comfortable? How can you help them? Invite other people to help too.

Clean up the yard of a person who is unable to do their own work.

Make food for them. Invite them to your home.

Ask them to come with you on a day trip.

How can you and your family encourage your church to be the kindest church in your whole town? **7**



Karen Holford is the family, children's, and women's ministries director of the Trans-European Division. She loves the story of the Compassionate Samaritan because it inspires people to be kind!



LET'S GET TO KNOW NOAH!

(GENESIS 6:1–9:17)

SCAN FOR AUDIO



BUILD A BOAT

God asked Noah to build a very big boat. It was to be 450 feet long, 75 feet high, and 45 feet wide. Ask a parent to help you measure these distances on a beach or in a park to help you see the ark's size. Noah and his family built the ark together. Work with your family to build a small boat using anything you can find, like building toys or boxes and tape. Can you make a boat that will float? What do you enjoy about working as a team with your family? What do you do well when you work as a team, and where might you be able to make improvements? Ask God to help your family be a great team that works together cheerfully! Read Psalm 133:1.



GOOD AND KIND NOAH

In Noah's day, God was very concerned about human beings—just as He is today. He saw that many of them were unkind to other people, and they were very violent. Noah was good and kind, and God decided to save him and his family and make a new start on the earth. List five ways in which people are being unkind and cruel today. Tell God your concerns for these unkind, sad, and dangerous situations. Ask Him what you can do, like Noah, to make the world kinder and safer. Listen to the Holy Spirit guiding you to be good and kind.



THANK GOD FOR TREES!

When God created trees, He gave us many wonderful gifts! Noah and his sons used the trees with the strongest wood to build the ark. Because of trees we can build houses, make furniture, burn wood for warmth or cooking, eat fruits and nuts, use fibers to make fabrics, plus many more things! Make a list of all the ways trees help us. Draw a picture of your favorite tree and write a Thank You prayer to God for making trees. Or collect leaves from the trees close to your home and see how many different ones you can find. When you go for a walk, put your hand on a few trees and thank God for them.



DESIGN A FLOATING ZOO!

Have you ever wondered what the ark looked like inside? It would need lots of different spaces to keep all the animals safe and happy. The elephants and giraffes would need very different places from the rabbits and birds. Make a list of your ten favorite creatures. Then take a big piece of paper and draw a plan for fitting them safely into the ark. What space would they need to live in? What would you need to gather to feed them? How would you clean out their homes each day? How much time would it take to care for these ten animals each day?

God helped Noah build an ark where all the animals could be safe. Praise God for caring for animals as well as people!



SHOWERS OF BLESSINGS

God sent rain when Noah's family and all the animals were safe in the ark. It rained for a very long time. Read Genesis 7:17-8:17 and see if you can work out how many days Noah and his family lived safely in the ark. Would you like to live on a boat for that many days? What would you enjoy, and what would be frustrating? Today, some places on earth have too much rain, and some don't have enough. Can you find out where these places are? Pray for more rain to fall on the very dry places and for less rain to fall on the places where there are floods.

Cut large raindrop shapes from blue or white paper. On each drop, write a short prayer thanking God for the blessings rain showers bring or asking God to protect those with too much or too little rain. Hang your raindrops by a window or from the spokes of an umbrella hanging from the ceiling.



COLLECT ANIMALS

God asked Noah to take seven of every clean animal (animals that could be eaten and sacrificed) and two of every unclean animal into the ark. What toy animals do you have in your home? Gather them all together and see if you can make pairs of the animals. Do you have seven of any animals? How would you care for each of these animals if they were real? Find out what they need to eat and what kinds of homes they live in. What can you do this week to care for the animals and birds God has made? You can look after your pets or put out birdseed and water for the creatures outside. Visit a zoo, farm, or pet shop. Watch the animals carefully and learn more about caring for them.





DOVES OF HOPE

After many days, Noah sent out a dove to fly over the earth. Eventually, it returned with a leaf from an olive tree. This was a sign for Noah that the water was going down and dry earth would soon appear. The dove gave everyone hope that they could soon leave the ark and live on dry land. What are you hoping for right now? A new home, some good friends, passing a test, that someone will get better? Cut dove shapes from white construction paper or card stock and write a hope on each one. Write today's date on the dove. When your hope is met in any way, write the story of the answer on the back of the dove.



OLIVE BRANCH OF PEACE


The dove brought a little twig from an olive tree. Down through the ages, an olive branch has been the symbol of people making peace after an argument. Make or draw a little pretend olive branch. Stick green paper leaves on a small branch, and make black olives out of buttons, fabric, scrunched-up black tissue, or whatever you can find. When you have argued with someone in your family, give the olive branch to the other person to show that you want to make peace again.

Read Romans 12:17, 18.



RAINBOW OF PROMISE

After Noah and his family had left the ark, God made a beautiful rainbow as a sign that He would never flood the world again. Take a sheet of white paper and your markers or crayons. Choose seven promises from the Bible and write them using the different colors of the rainbow to make a rainbow of verses. Ask an adult to help you by drawing the curved lines for you to write on. Put your rainbow of promise on the wall or give it to someone who needs encouragement.

Or gather things you love that are all the colors of the rainbow. Arrange them into a pattern or picture and thank God for making such a colorful world! 

***Karen Holford** writes from England, which is famous for its rainy weather. She has learned to thank God for the rain because it makes her world beautiful and fresh, and there is always plenty of water to drink!*



SCAN FOR AUDIO



Let's Mingle!

JESUS BLESSED PEOPLE and showed them God's love by mingling with them. Mingling is about being with people, listening for their needs, caring for them, and blessing them. How can you mingle like Jesus and share God's love?

JESUS MINGLED

Ellen White wrote a beautiful message about how to mingle. Read it together as a family and discuss what it means to you. Talk about the ways you are a blessing in your community. Make a poster together of this quote. Or write it in your own words: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.' . . . Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit" (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 143, 144).

JESUS MINGLED WITH KIDS!

Jesus mingled with all kinds of people. Every person in the world is a son or daughter of God, and He wanted to show them how special they are to Him. Read the story of Jesus mingling with children in Mark 10:13-16. Imagine you are right there with Him, seeing Him, listening to Him, and feeling His hug of blessing. Act out the story with your family or friends. What do you think He would say to you, and to your parents, to bless you?



MINGLE MAP

Draw a Mingle Map of your lives. It doesn't have to be an exact map. Just think about the places where you mingle with people who may not know how much God loves them. Perhaps at school, in your street or village, where you go to buy your food, at your sports, music, or craft clubs, etc. Draw a picture of each place on a separate sheet of paper. List the people you know there, and pray for them. Write down some things you could do to show them God's amazing love whenever you are mingling there. Work together as a family to bless the places where you mingle. Are there other places where you could mingle too?

SALTY PEOPLE



Jesus mingled with people so that He could show them His love and bless them. Jesus also told us that we are the salt of the world (Matthew 5:13). We are salt when we mingle with people and help them “taste” God’s loving character through the way we treat them. Make a list of all the good uses of salt. Then think about how you and your family could be like salt in your communities. For example, salt melts ice and salt can make things taste better. Hunt around your home for examples of salt, and see how many things contain salt. Or make popcorn or other food that tastes better with salt. Eat some without salt, and then add salt and taste the difference! Or make a label for your saltshaker to remind everyone who uses it that they are the salt of the earth!

LIGHT PEOPLE



Jesus also told us that we are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14-16). We are lights when the way we live shows people how much God loves them. Ask an adult to help you make a safe lantern. Use a battery-operated candle in an old jar or put a thick layer of salt in the bottom of a jar and place a real candle inside it. Light the candle when there are adults in the room to make sure it is safe. Cut a piece of paper to wrap around the jar. Choose paper that the light can shine through. Write on the paper some of the ways that God shows His love to you, such as being our Forgiver, Provider, Comforter, and Blessor. Then light your lantern and talk about how you can show the light of God’s love to others around you. Ask God to help you be His sparkling light right where you are.

PRAYER WALK

Walk past your neighbors’ homes in your street or apartment block and pray silently for each household as you pass their doors. Look for clues to see whether children live there or an elderly person, and listen to the Holy Spirit inspiring you about what to pray. God knows everything your neighbors need, so pray that He will show you how to care for them and mingle with them.

BIRTHDAY BLESSING



Look out for clues that someone in your neighborhood is having a birthday. Even if you don’t know them, you can take them a homemade treat and say you noticed it was their birthday and you wanted to celebrate with them. Read Romans 12:15. What else could you do to be happy with people who are happy?

MINGLER REMINDER



Bring together your best craft materials, or even just paper, old magazines, scissors, and glue. Make a poster or object for your home that reminds your family to be minglers. What about making something small that you could attach to your school backpack so that you are reminded to mingle and show love? For example, find some wire, thread all kinds of different things onto it, and shape it into a heart.

IF JESUS MINGLED TODAY

Imagine that Jesus came to your town today. How would He mingle? Where would He go to mingle and be with people (parks, shopping areas, cafés, hospitals)? What might He do to bless people? How could you follow in His footsteps?

MINGLED PRAYER

Cut a large heart out of cardstock. Write the word “Love” in the middle of the heart. Around the edge of the heart write some different ways God loves us that we can share with others. Then punch some holes around the edge of the heart and tie tags through the holes. On each tag write the name of a person you are mingling with and some special prayer requests that you have for them. Use this as a daily prayer reminder.

AN ABC OF BLESSING

Make a long list of all the different ways you could bless people as you mingle with them. Try to find at least one activity for each letter of the alphabet: A – Appreciating them, Assisting them; B – Baking for them; C – Card making, etc. **7**

Karen Holford carries tiny toys in her purse in case she meets a sad child who needs cheering up. She also keeps Band-Aids to give to people who are hurt.

Let's Work Together!

Below is a list of people who worked together in different ways. Match the people to things they did together.

PEOPLE WHO WORKED TOGETHER

Noah and his sons

Jesus and a little boy

Moses' mother and Miriam

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

Craftsmen and weavers

Ruth and Naomi

Moses and Aaron

Paul and Silas

Priscilla and Aquila

Adam and Eve

Esther and Mordecai

WHAT THEY DID TOGETHER

visited Pharaoh together

looked after a garden together

traveled and preached together

made tents together

traveled and lived together

stood up for right together

fed 5,000 people together

prayed together for Jews to be safe

built the ark together

worked together to create the tabernacle

worked together to keep Baby Moses safe



2 HANDS ARE BETTER THAN 1

Many things are easier to do, and more fun, when we have someone to help us. Most jobs are also easier when we have two hands. Challenge your family to try doing these activities with one hand. See who can do it the fastest!

- Tie a shoelace or tie a knot in a piece of string
- Make a sandwich or your favorite snack
- Fold a piece of paper and put it into an envelope
- Peel and slice a banana or another kind of fruit
- Put a sock on your foot
- Draw a circle and cut it out

Now ask someone to blindfold you with a soft scarf. Try doing the same things without being able to see.



1 body

—lots of parts

Paul talks about people in the church being like different parts of the same body. Everyone is different, and everyone has a special job to do, so we all need to work together, just like the parts of your body, or just like your family. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 in your favorite Bible version. Count how many times Paul mentions the following words:



eye



hand



foot



ear



body

Working together

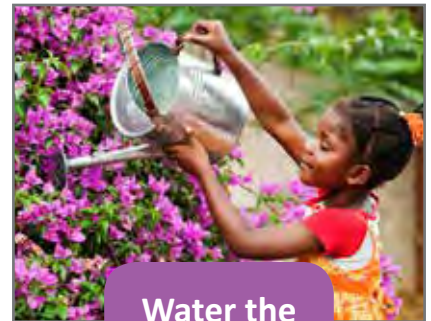
Lots of chores are easier and more fun when you do them together. Circle all the chores that you could do with someone else. Circle the chore twice if you have done it in the past week.



Help prepare dinner



Tidy up your toys



Water the plants



Set the table for dinner



Sweep leaves in the yard

Make a bed



Empty the trash



Wash the dishes or fill the dishwasher

Hang up the laundry to dry

Let's Work Together!

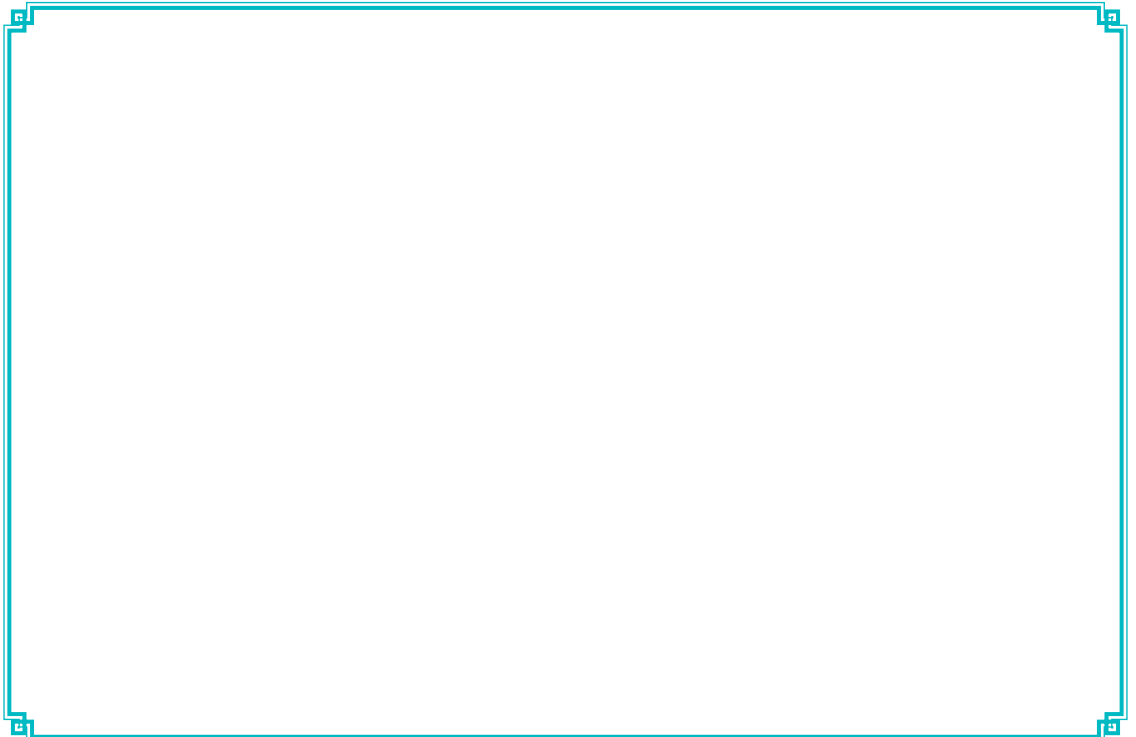
My Helping Diary



- Take a plain sheet of paper and fold it in half lengthways.
- Unfold, then fold it in half the other way, and then fold it again in the same direction.
- Open the paper out flat. You should have a sheet of paper with eight rectangles.
- In the top left rectangle write, "My Helping Diary."
- Label the other seven rectangles with the days of the week.
- Each day of the week, use a blue pen to write down all the ways you helped others.
- Each day use a red pen to write down the ways other people helped you.
- At the end of the week, thank God for everyone who helped you, and thank Him that you can help others too. How can you help more people next week?

It's more beautiful together

Inside this picture frame draw or write about a time when you worked together with someone to do something special. Or you might draw a bigger picture on another piece of paper.



We need each other!

Jesus knows that we all need friends to be there for us. As He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, He really wanted His friends to be with Him. He needed them to comfort Him, encourage Him, and pray for Him. So He was very sad when they left Him alone and went off to sleep under a bush. But we can help our friends and family in many different ways. Let's see what the Bible has to say about how we can help each other. (All verses taken from the New International Version.)

_____ for each other. James 5:16

_____ one another. John 13:34, 35

_____ one another. Gal. 5:13

_____ one another. Rom. 15:7

_____ () one another above yourselves. Rom. 12:10
(extra letter needed in some English-speaking countries)

_____ with one another.
Rom. 12:16

_____ with those who _____.
Rom. 12:15

_____ with those who _____. Rom. 12:15

_____ each other's _____. Gal. 6:2

Be _____ and _____
to one another. Eph. 4:32

Find all the answers. Then work together with your family to think of how you can put these Bible verses into action.

- List 10 ways you can pray for family members.
- List 10 ways you can pray for other people.
- List 10 ways to show love to each other.
- List 10 ways you can serve each other.
- List 10 ways to be kind and caring to the people in your community.
- List 10 ways to show respect and honor to people older, younger, and the same age as you.
- List 10 ways to show acceptance to people who are different from you, to people who have hurt you, or to those who have made mistakes.
- List 10 ways to live in harmony or peacefully with other people.
- List 10 ways to comfort people who are sad.
- List 10 ways to celebrate with people who are happy.
- List 10 ways you can work together to "carry a burden" or share each other's chores. ■

Karen Holford writes from Scotland. She enjoys working with her friends to help homeless people.



LET'S WORSHIP OUTSIDE!

WORSHIP WALK BACKPACK

Before you go on a worship walk, pack a bag full of things you will need. Include water, snacks, your Bible, paper for drawing and writing, and pens or pencils. Bring a camera if you don't have one on your phone so you can take pictures of things that fill you with wonder. You might like to include nature books so you can identify plants, birds, and animals along the way and a magnifying glass to help you look closely at God's creation. Take small bags or containers for collecting nuts and berries or items you would like to take home. You could also include art materials for stone painting or chalk for writing encouraging messages.



I SPY GOD!

Play an "I spy!" game choosing things God has made. One person spots a natural object and tells the others, "I spy with my little eye, something God made that is . . ." They name the color, shape, or texture of the object without saying what they've chosen. When someone guesses what the object is, each person describes something about that object that fills them with wonder and praise to God for making it.



KINDNESS STONES

You will need paint for the stones, permanent marker pens, paintbrushes, and a jar or cup for water. You will also need quick-drying sealant to protect the designs. Diluted white glue (PVA) can seal the paint and make it waterproof. Gather large, smooth stones on your walk, paint them, and let them dry in the sun. Use pens to write encouraging messages or Bible verses on the stones. Then brush a coat of sealant over the design.

Leave the stones slightly hidden so they can easily be discovered by people. Pray that the messages will bring them joy!



BIBLE BAG GAME

Take a cloth bag on your walk, or a plastic bag that is not see-through.

Gather different fallen objects that might be mentioned in Bible stories, such as a stone, seeds, leaves, fruit, sheep's wool (to represent sheep), feathers (to represent birds), scraps of cloth, coins, an eggshell, and other objects. Invite each person to take an object out of the bag and think of a Bible story that mentions the item. Or ask each person in the group to describe different Bible stories that include the object.



SHARING WALK

Pack some sharing snacks to take on your walk and give to others along the way. It is a good way to be kind and show them God's love.



RAINBOW SEARCH

Hunt for fallen natural objects in each color of the rainbow. Or take photos of them if you have a camera. Praise God for all the different objects and their colors!



GUESS MY STORY!

Encourage everyone to gather up natural things that have fallen to the ground. Leave everything else safe to grow. Use the things you have found to create a picture from a Bible story, laying the objects on the ground to illustrate the scene. Then try to guess the story that each person has created.





LEAVE A MESSAGE

Write an encouraging message in the dirt along the path, or use found items, such as small twigs or stones, to create the letters for your message or to make a smile or a heart.



LEAF ART

Flowers need to be left for insect food and pollination, but in many places leaves can be collected and used for arts and crafts. Collect colored leaves in the fall to make pictures and patterns on the ground. Or turn a leaf upside down, lay paper on top, and use waxed crayons to make leaf rubbings. Or make a leaf crown. To do that, cut 2-inch wide strips of card stock that are long enough to wrap around a head and make a crown. Lay them flat, place double-sided sticky tape along the length of the strip, and attach different colored leaves, or pressed and dried leaves, along the strip to form a leaf crown. Remember that you are all princesses and princes in God's kingdom. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24, 25.

PICTURE THIS!

Find something God has made and draw it on a piece of paper. It doesn't have to be perfect. Look at the little details of the shell, leaf, or flower that you found. Use your art materials to add some color to the picture. Include a Bible verse. Hang your pictures up when you get home or send them to a loved one as a gift.



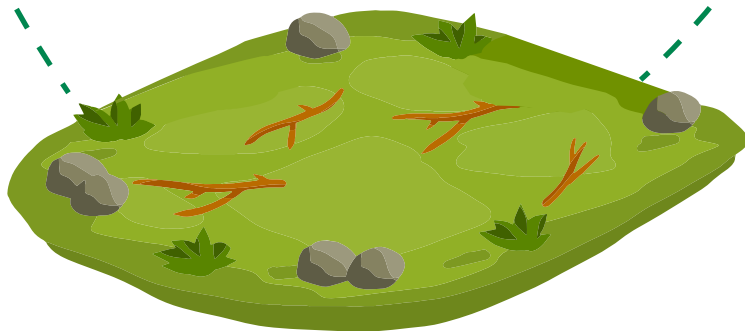
PRAY ALONG THE WAY

As you walk, look for all kinds of things to pray about. Take turns finding things to praise God for and to thank Him for. Tell Him your concerns about a difficult situation you find, like lots of garbage on the ground or not enough rain. Pray for the people you meet along the way, and ask God questions about the things He has made.




GUIDED OBSTACLE RACE

Work with your family to make a simple obstacle course outside with logs, stones, and bushes to walk around and step over. Ask a grown-up to blindfold your eyes, hold your hand, and guide you around the obstacles by telling you which way to move and how high to raise your feet. Then talk about how God and His Holy Spirit guide us through the obstacles of life. How does God help us to find our way in a dark world without falling over? Remember, if we do fall over, He will always pick us up again. Read Psalm 37:24 and Psalm 116:8.



CREATION COLLECTION

Give each person a cardboard egg carton with six sections. Ask them to find something to represent each day of creation: perhaps a white-and-black object for day one; something blue for day two; grass, leaves, or a petal for day three; a flower like a sun or star for day four; a feather for day five; and something from an animal for day six. Show your displays to each other as you rest and remember day seven (see Genesis 1). 



LOST SHEEP

Take a toy sheep with you on your walk, or just a ball of wool. Ask an adult to hide it along the path. See if you can find it. Or ask an adult to hide nearby and cry “Baa!” until you find the “lost sheep.” If you are in a safe place, you could hide and be found too! Read Luke 15:3-7 together.

***Karen Holford** is Family, Children’s, and Women’s Ministries Director for the Trans-European Division. She loves spending time in God’s creation because it makes her feel happy, healthy, and creative.*



Living FOR REAL!

DO YOU LOVE PLAYING on a computer, tablet, or phone? Technology is very useful. It helps us learn, work, connect with each other, and share the good news of God's love with others. But, like many other good things, it can also stop us from learning, working, helping others, having fun family times, and worshipping God. When time with our gadgets gets in the way of time with God or family and friends, then we need to show them who is in charge! Put them down and have some real fun in the real world!

KEEPING DEVICES UNDER CONTROL

Have a meeting with your family and decide together on the best way to manage all the screens in your home. Some families say that children can use their devices for up to one hour a day, and only when they have done their homework, had dinner together as a family, had family worship, done at least one chore, and spent 10 minutes tidying their bedroom. Other families put all their devices "to bed" overnight, on a tray in the kitchen or locked away in a cupboard, so that everyone has a healthy night's sleep. What rules would help your family to stay in control of your screen time?

Here are lots of fun things to do FOR REAL—in the REAL WORLD, with REAL PEOPLE—because that's so much better than experiencing life through a small screen!





TREASURE HUNT

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11. Hunt through your house and gather up all the loose coins. Ask the adults in your home to add their loose coins. Count them up and see if you have enough to pay for an ADRA gift at <https://giftcatalog.adra.org>. When you have enough money, ask an adult to pay for the gift. Then pray for the people who will receive your gift.



GRATITUDE RAINBOW

Read Psalm 100 or 107. Ask each person in your home to find six things they are grateful for. Each object must be a different solid color from the spectrum of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Lay all the items out in rows of color to make a rainbow. Not enough? Go and hunt for more! Then take a photograph.

HEAVENLY HOMES

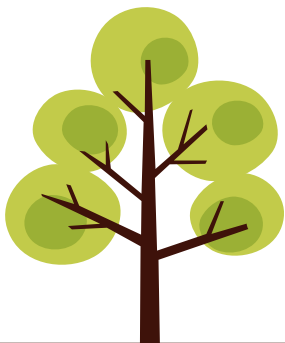
Read John 14:1-3. What do you think your home will look like in heaven? What do you have in your home on earth that you will still need in heaven? And what won't you need? Work together as a family to create an imaginary heavenly home in an old shoebox. Use your best glittery scraps and craft materials to decorate it.

GROWN UP SKILLS

Ask an adult in your home to teach you a useful life skill—something you need to know to be a safe and successful grown up. Make a list of important skills together and see if you can learn a new one every month.

KINDNESS WAS HERE!

Read Ephesians 4:32. Cut a stack of paper hearts, about 4 inches (or 10 cm) wide. Write on each heart "Kindness was here!" Give each person in your home 4-5 hearts. Whenever you do a secret act of kindness for someone, leave a heart to let them know. You could make a bed, clean shoes, tidy up, set the table, take out trash, etc.



FAMILY TREE

Ask your parents to help you make a family tree. Visit or call your relatives who are still alive. Ask them to tell you their favorite memories. Make a book of all their stories.





SLING SEVEN!

Read Hebrews 13:16. Find 7 good pieces of clothing or toys that you have outgrown or no longer need. Ask the adults in your home if you can give them to your younger siblings or donate them to a thrift store.



THANK YOU!

Write a thank you note or handmade card for each person in your family. Thank them for something they did that made you really happy. Tuck the card into their pajamas to surprise them at bedtime!



BIBLE OBJECT GAME

Find a small cloth bag or pillowcase. Hunt through your home for small objects that are mentioned in Bible stories (such as stone, seed, small piece of cloth, small coin, toy fish and bird, piece of net, toy sheep and cow, small candle, piece of wood, fake flower, small baby toy, toy tree, gold star, toy boat). Put all the small objects into the bag. Take turns pulling an object out of the bag without looking. Name a story that contains the object, put it back in the bag, and pass the bag to the next person. If objects are pulled out more than once, then a new story or Bible verse must be mentioned each time.



MAILBOX

It is more fun to get a real letter in your mailbox than a quick email. Write a proper, handwritten letter, in your best handwriting, to an elderly relative. Include a picture you have drawn, a bookmark, a poem or story, or a collage of pressed flowers and leaves. You will make their day! Writing letters to people can be a fun hobby, and maybe they will write back.

LOVE HUNT

Read Psalm 103. Search in your home for five things that remind you of God's love. Then show the items to your family and tell why you chose each one.

BUILD A HUT

Build a hut together. Many Jewish families build outdoor huts and live in them when they are celebrating the harvest. Try building a hut with your family, outside or in your home. Make it big and strong enough for everyone to sleep in for at least one night, and try cooking out there too.



SAY IT ON THE SIDEWALK!

Use sidewalk chalk to write an encouraging message or Bible verse on the sidewalk near your home. Decorate it so people will notice and read it. Maybe you could write a different message each week so that people look forward to seeing your happy messages.



HELP!

Do something kind. Talk with your family about a simple project you can do together to help others. You are being God's hands and heart in the world! This is much more exciting than anything you can do on a small screen.

ACTION STATIONS!

Doing screen stuff stops us from moving our bodies in healthy ways. Make sure you move and stretch whenever you can. Play your favorite praise music and create your own lively actions to illustrate the song.

BIBLE SCENE

Use your construction toy sets to make a scene from a Bible story. See if you can guess each other's stories. No bricks? Use whatever you can find, or bits and pieces from nature.


CREATIVE REFLECTIONS

When you read a Bible story or a verse you especially like, create something to express your ideas. Making something, or writing down your ideas, will help you think about the Bible story in a fresh way. It doesn't have to be perfect, because this is just between you and God. Make a collection of craft and recycled materials to use for your projects.



EXPLORE OUTDOORS

Use wax crayons and copier paper to make rubbings of tree bark. Lay the paper over the bark. Hold it still and rub the side of the wax crayon over the paper. It will reveal the pattern of the bark. Do this on several different trees to compare their textures. Or turn over a rotting tree trunk and look for all the creepy crawlies underneath. Mark off a small square of ground and see how many different plants, creatures, and stones you can find in the space. Look at the stars at night and see how many constellations you can find and name. Praise God for all the amazing REAL stuff He's made.

Please email us (or write us a real letter!). Tell us your family's favorite ways to manage screen time. And what are your favorite FOR REAL activities? 

Karen Holford loves having real fun with her three young grandchildren.



to Learn!

LIFELONG LEARNERS

Many Bible heroes kept on learning all through their lives. That's what made them so wise and strong. Unscramble the names of these Bible heroes. They all learned how to do the same job. What do you think they did? Answers are upside down on the bottom of the page.

1. RAM BA HA _____
2. ESSOM _____
3. VADDI _____
4. JABCO _____
5. JUSSE _____
6. SOHJEP _____
7. CASIA _____
- _____
- _____

WHAT DID THESE PEOPLE LEARN?

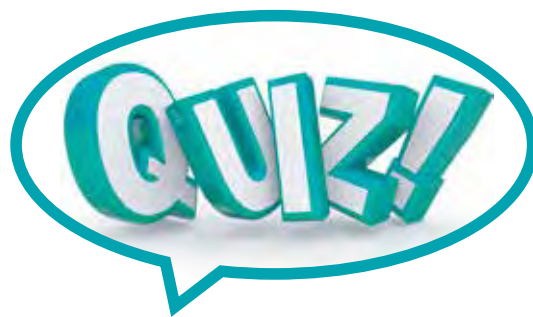
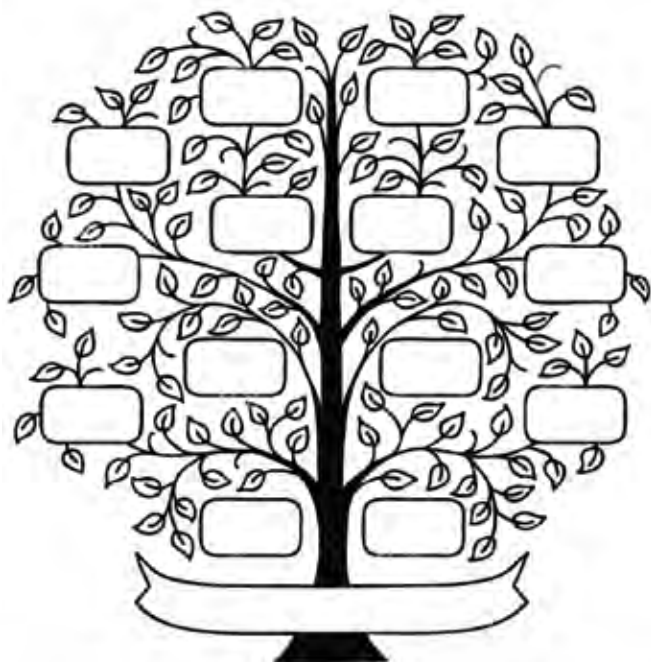
Match the Bible characters to the skills they learned:

NAME	WHAT THEY LEARNED
Ruth	How to make a tent
Noah	How to take care of a church
Peter	How to play a musical instrument
Paul	How to glean
Adam	How to be a queen
Samuel	How to fish
Joseph (Jesus' father)	How to lead an army
Esther	How to build a boat
Gideon	How to look after a garden
David	How to be a carpenter

Answers: 1. Abraham 2. Moses 3. David 4. Jacob 5. Jesus 6. Joseph 7. Isaac. They all learned how to be good shepherds.

5 FUN WAYS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BIBLE!

Draw a family tree for Abraham's family, starting with his father's family and continuing to Joseph, Jacob's son. You can check your family tree against one of Abraham's family trees on the Internet.



Make a Bible quiz. Choose a Bible story or a chapter from the Bible. Read it really well and write down at least five questions about it to ask your family.

- Choose a Bible story, like a parable, and then draw a comic strip story to illustrate it.
- Read all about the tabernacle that the children of Israel made in the wilderness (see Exodus 25-40). Make a scale model of the tabernacle using your favorite building toys or scrap materials. To get ideas, watch the story of how the tabernacle was made: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sttHtsAX0Ik www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8DLDAwR1GM www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eQ92jBUciE

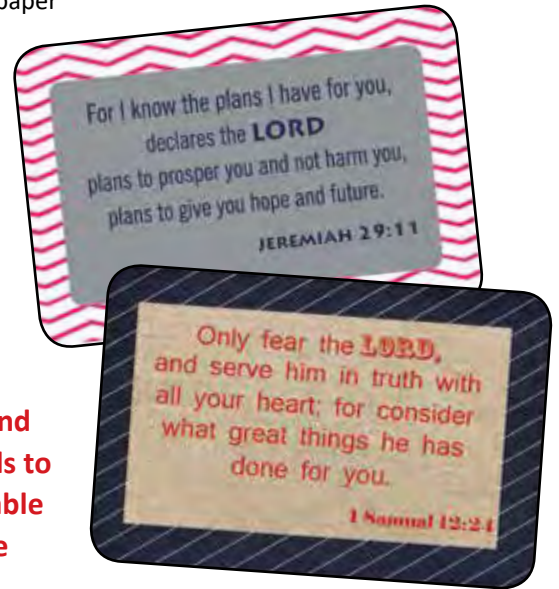
Read all about your favorite Bible character. Write the person's life story, or write some journal entries for their most amazing days. For example, write Daniel's story, or write a journal entry for the day he was rescued from the lion's den.

TEN FUN WAYS TO LEARN A MEMORY VERSE

1. Buy a packet of alphabet pasta. Pour the letters onto a large dish. Find all the letters you need to spell out your memory verse. See who can complete the verse first, or work together to spell out the words.
2. Create a rebus (picture sentence) of the memory verse. Find pictures in old magazines to illustrate the different words. Add and subtract letters to help you create the words you need. For example “and” might be the picture of a hand minus an “h,” and “love” might be a picture of a glove minus a “g” (see some examples at <http://scripturelady.com/rebus-bible-verses-for-kids/>).
3. Write each word of a Bible verse on a different card or piece of paper. See how quickly you can pin them to a rope line (such as a laundry line).
4. Write each word on a large piece of paper. Lay them out in the right order, like stepping stones. Secure them to the floor with painter’s tape so they don’t slip. Step from one word to the next, saying the words as you walk. Keep repeating the journey until you have memorized the verse.
5. Arrange some objects to help you remember a memory verse. For example: “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Ps. 34:8). Place a piece of delicious fruit on the table, then a pair of glasses or a magnifying glass, followed by a Bible, and then something good, such as bread. Why not take a photo of your arrangement and turn it into a card or poster?

6. Make a Bible word collage. Cut the words for your memory verse from an old newspaper or church magazine. If you can’t find a word, cut out separate letters to spell the word. Stick the words and letters onto a sheet of paper to spell out the memory verse.

7. **Make a Bible verse poster, card, or bookmark. Use your favorite art and craft materials to create a suitable design for the verse.**



8. Write a Bible verse on a piece of card. Then cut the card into pieces to make a jigsaw. Put the pieces back together again to make the memory verse.
9. Choose a Bible verse. Write the first letter of each word in the verse on a small card. So “Taste and see that the Lord is good” would be “TASTTLIG Psalm 34:8.” Make a few cards with different verses. Pick up a card and guess what the verse might be. Or keep the cards in your pocket to remind you of the whole verse.
10. Write each word of a Bible verse on a separate card. Ask someone to shuffle the cards and place them around your yard or around a room where you can run about. You should be able to see all the words. Run to each word in the verse, in the right order, saying the words as you touch them. Repeat the activity, hiding a different word each time until you can run and say the verse without seeing any of the words.



FUN FACT!

Did you know that your brain learns things better when you laugh? It's also more creative and better at solving problems after it's had a good giggle! Do something that makes you laugh, like looking at funny pictures of animals or asking an adult to tell you a favorite joke. Then try to learn a Bible verse or do your schoolwork. Do you think laughing helps?

WHAT HELPS YOU LEARN?

Think about the ways you learn best. Circle the things that help you learn. Show someone what you circled so they can help you learn.

Teaching someone else how to do the task

Understanding why it's important to learn the skill

Knowing it's ok if I don't get it right the first time

Being able to try something when no one is watching

Reading the instructions in a book

Practicing until I get it right

Being told what to do

Being able to ask questions if I'm not sure what to do


Something else . . .

FUTURE LEARNING!





- What would you most like to learn? How to fly, ride a horse, play the piano, draw mountains, design computer games, or something else amazing?
- Draw a picture of a skill you'd like to learn.
- Then show your picture to an adult and see if they can guess what you'd like to learn.



WHAT DID YOU LEARN THIS WEEK?

Ask four adults what they learned this week. Draw a picture of the person in one of the squares below and write what they learned in the line underneath. The wisest people never stop learning (Prov. 1:5). 

Karen Holford writes from Scotland. She is the Family Ministries director for the Trans-European Division.

MAKE YOUR OWN GAMES



BIBLE GAMES CAN BE EXPENSIVE. Here are some that you can make for yourselves, and some that don't need any preparation at all.



BAG OF BIBLE BITS

Find a medium-sized bag and fill it with objects from Bible stories, such as a stone, a plastic fish, a stick, a glass droplet or gem to represent water, a pearl bead, a coin, a star shape, a piece of white cloth, an angel drawing, a small bottle of perfume, a piece of bread, a small basket, something gold, a toy sheep, bird, tree, or boat, etc. Take turns pulling something from the bag and then naming a Bible story that includes the object. If the object is chosen again, the player has to name a different Bible story. Collect one point for every Bible story named. You can also play cooperatively by choosing an object and working together to list as many Bible stories as possible.

STORY SCAVENGER

Choose a Bible story and read it together. Set a timer for 5 minutes. Race with your family to see how many objects (or pictures of objects) mentioned in the story you can find in and around your home.



CREATIVE PROVERBS

Choose a chapter from the book of Proverbs. Choose one of the chapters in which each verse is a different proverb. Ask each person to choose a proverb from the chapter without telling anyone else which verse they have chosen and then find their own way of illustrating it. You can mime the proverb, arrange a collection of objects to illustrate it, draw a picture or comic strip, rewrite the verse in modern language, turn it into a poem, etc. After 10 minutes, show what you've created and see who can guess which verse you're each illustrating. Talk about how the wisdom in these verses can help us in our lives today.





NAME CUBES

Find or cut six blank wooden cubes. You can buy wooden cubes in craft stores or cut your own. Use a fine permanent marker to write one letter on each side of the cubes. (See below for the letters to write on each cube.)

Turn and rearrange 3 to 6 of the cubes until you can spell the name of a person in the Bible. Write the name on a sheet of paper and see if you can find more than 100 names. Include the Bible reference for the verse where you found each name. Make sets of the cubes, give them to your friends at church, and see who can find the most names.

Cube 1: J – A – D – E – S – N

Cube 2: M – O – R – G – I – T

Cube 3: E – H – A – L – B – K

Cube 4: A – U – E – V – Z – M

Cube 5: P – L – N – C – O – R

Cube 6: D – H – S – P – I – T

CREATIVE BIBLE CHALLENGE

Gather lots of different craft supplies in a large box. Take a stack of index cards and write a different creative Bible challenge on each card. Here are some ideas to get you started. You and your family can add as many as you like:

- Make a thank-you card from Adam and Eve to God, thanking Him for making the Garden of Eden for them to live in.
- Design a dress for Esther to wear when she goes to invite the king to her dinner party.
- Imagine what your room will look like in heaven and make a model of it.
- Imagine what it looked like inside the ark. How would you design the space so that every animal could live safely and it would be easy for Noah and his family to care for all the creatures?
- Design an award for one of your Bible heroes.
- Create a special reminder for your family that will encourage them to make Sabbath a delight for each person in your home.
- Choose a favorite Bible verse and find a creative way to illustrate it.
- Choose a favorite story from the Bible. Make and write your own mini storybook.
- Design a coat of many colors for Joseph to wear.
- Imagine you could design a flower or animal for God to create. What would it look like?
- Create a scene from your favorite Bible story.
- Make a comic-strip style story about your favorite Bible character.

Add more challenge cards whenever you have a new idea. Work on the creative challenges on your own or as a family. Keep looking for interesting craft materials to add to your box.



NAME CHAIN

Sit in a circle and ask the youngest person to name a character in the Bible. The next person has to name someone whose name begins with the last letter of the first Bible name called out: SaraH – HamaN – NabaL – LukE – ElizabetH – HeroD – etc. Take turns around the circle, naming characters in this way. No name can be used more than once. See how long you can make the chain before you run out of new names to add.



BIBLE LIBRARY

Take 66 blank index cards and write the name of each book of the Bible on a separate card. Write the books of the Old Testament in blue and the books of the New Testament in red so you can easily separate them.



ONE-PLAYER CHALLENGE:

See how quickly you can arrange the 66 cards in the correct order. Once you have finished, use your Bible to check that you have put everything in the right place. Start by using just the New Testament cards.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Invite each person to choose a card with a Bible book written on it. Provide marker pens and ask them to decorate the side of the card that has the name of the book written on it with something that illustrates the name of the book, its theme, or a story in the book.



FAMILY CHALLENGE:

Shuffle the cards and share them equally between players. You might like to use just the Old Testament or New Testament cards to start with. Time yourself to see how quickly you can place your cards in the correct order, one book at a time.

SERIOUS CHALLENGE:

Deal 6 cards to each player. Don't let anyone see your cards. Without speaking to each other, place the cards face up on a stack in the middle of the table in the correct order. Remember that your group doesn't have all the books, so the names will not be placed one after the other as they are in the Bible. You have to look at each other carefully to guess who might have the card with the next available book in the sequence. For example, you start the game, and no one has Genesis. When no one rushes to put down Genesis, you wonder who has the next card. So you look around the group to see if anyone else looks eager to put down a

card. You have Deuteronomy, but you need to wait and see if anyone puts down Exodus, Leviticus, or Numbers. If you put your card down too fast and someone has a previous card, then you need to reshuffle, deal, and start the game again. Each person has to be ready with their cards and judge the best time to place their card on the stack because no one knows which cards have been dealt and who has them. You are all working silently together to complete the task of placing all the cards in your hands on the stack in the correct sequence, even though you will not have every card. You can also change the number of cards each person is given.

CHARACTER BUILDING



- Take 25 cards and write a character strength on each card: appreciating God's creation; bravery; caution; creativity; gratitude; humility/modesty; kindness; love; social responsibility; enjoyment of learning; perseverance; forgiveness; curiosity; self-control; teamwork; wisdom; honesty; social intelligence; fairness/justice; hopefulness; sense of humor; leadership skills; enthusiasm; spirituality; compassion/empathy.
- Stack the cards facedown.

- Turn over the top card. Roll a dice and follow the instructions below.
 - 1 – Name a Bible character who showed this character strength.
 - 2 – Find a Bible verse about this character strength.
 - 3 – Tell how you have shown this character strength in your own life in the past week, or how you want to practice it in the week to come.
 - 4 – Tell someone in the group when you saw them practice this character strength.

- 5 – Describe a time when Jesus used this character strength.
- 6 – Explain why this character strength is important to grow in your life.

Use this game to inspire your family to grow more like Jesus. **J**

Karen Holford is a grandma to Zara (8), Leo (6), and Max (4). She loves playing games with them, especially games that help them to learn more about God.

Money: A Gift From God

1.

Ask your parents to help you find the following items:

- a tiny gift box or bag
- a plain envelope
- three paper hearts
- 10 identical coins
- marker pens



2.

Place all 10 coins and one paper heart in the gift bag. This is a reminder that all of our money is a gift from God because He loves us.

3.

Now take the coins out of the bag and place them in a line. Count them out from 1 to 10.

4.

Take coin number 1 and put it in the envelope with one heart. This is your tithe to give back to God. Tithe is a special way to say "thank You" to God and show our love for Him. It also shows that we trust Him for everything we need. Decorate the envelope with the marker pens and write "Thank You, God!" on it. Your tithe money helps God's work around the world.

5.

God gives us money to share with others or to help us do kind things for people. Take coin number 2 and place it on a paper heart. How will you use this money to help others?

6.

Eight coins are left for you. They are all gifts from God. How will you use them wisely? Why not save at least half of them for something important and special?

DESIGN A COIN!



- Find some different coins and look at them. Whose head is on them? What pictures are on them? What messages are written on them?
- Draw two large circles on a sheet of paper. These represent the front and back of a coin. Now get creative and design both sides of a coin for God's kingdom.
- What pictures and words can you put on your coin to remind everyone that money is a gift from God?
- What can you put on the coin to remind people to help others with their money?
- Show your coin to others and explain the design.

TITHE STORIES

Giving our tithe back to God is a special way to thank Him for everything He gives us. And when we tithe, God does something extra special with the rest of our money: somehow the 90 percent lasts longer or goes further.

- Ask people in your family and church to tell you about the wonderful things God has done because they've paid tithe. They will have some great stories to tell you about surprises and miracles!
- Write their stories in a notebook.
- Look for ways that God helps you to take care of your money and how He helps your parents when they pay tithe. Write them in your book too.



HAPPY MONEY!

- Researchers have discovered that the happiest people are not those who *want* and *have* the most money, but those who *give* the most money away!
- Try putting some money in a charity box or buying a gift for someone needy (find ideas at adra.org/make-a-difference/gift-catalog/). How did it feel to help someone?



SHARING MONEY BOX

Make a box in which your family can save money for helping other people.

- Ask a grown-up for an empty food container with a plastic lid.
- Ask them to cut a slot in the plastic lid big enough to put money through.
- Glue white paper over the sides of the container. Then decorate your box with pictures of people who need help (cut them out of old magazines).
- Encourage everyone in your family to put some money in the box at least once a week, even if it's just a few pennies.
- Pray that your money will grow. Ask God to help you choose a caring project together. Use your money to buy chickens or seeds for a family overseas or toys for needy children in your town.




CHEERFUL GIVER POSTER

- Read 2 Corinthians 9:7. It says, “God loves a cheerful giver.”
- Talk with your family about this verse. Why is it sometimes hard to give cheerfully? What helps us to give cheerfully? Remembering our own blessings from God can help us want to give something back to Him.
- Make a poster or postcard with this verse on it as a reminder to give cheerfully.



DESIGN YOUR OWN OFFERING ENVELOPES

Your church has special envelopes for tithes and offerings. Why not make some of your own?

- Find some plain envelopes and decorate them for your own tithes and offerings.
- You're giving some of your money back to God to say "thank You" for all the things He's given you, so make them really beautiful with markers and stickers.
- Next time you go to church, put your offering money in your special envelope. 

Karen Holford is a pastor's wife in Scotland.

Noah's Animals

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BIBLE STORY? MAYBE IT'S THE ONE ABOUT NOAH'S ARK!
HERE ARE SOME FUN WAYS TO EXPLORE THE STORY WITH YOUR FAMILY.



GET INTO THE STORY

Read the story of Noah in your favorite Bible or Bible storybook. You'll find it in Genesis 6:9—9:17.

Use a toy ark and some toy animals to tell your family the story of Noah. If you don't have an ark, make one out of a shoebox and draw pictures of the animals instead.

Now talk about these questions together:

- What do you like best about the story of Noah?
- Would you want to be Noah or his family? Imagine together what it would be like to spend so many years building an ark with your family.
- What do you think it would be like looking after all those animals in a ship for months and months?
- What do you think it would feel like when you finally left the ark?
- What do you think is the most important message in this story?
- What does this story say about God's love for you?

ANIMAL PAIRS

- Gather all your toy animals together, or use animal picture cards from a matching game.
- Put the matching animals together, and see how many pairs of animals you can find.
- Next ask an adult to hide all the animals for you. Then hunt for the hidden animals and put them back into pairs.
- Did you know that Noah put seven of every kind of clean animal onto the ark? Can you find seven sheep or cows (or pictures of them) in your home?

DESIGN AN ARK

God gave Noah very careful instructions about building an ark. He told him the size and shape of the ark, and what wood to use. God probably also told Noah how to make the best places to keep all the different animals safe inside the ark, and how to store enough food for the long journey.



- Find the biggest piece of paper you can and draw a picture of what you think it looked like inside the ark.
- Imagine where the people lived, where the food was stored, and how they would keep the animals clean and fed. What kind of pen would each animal need? How would you stop the lions and tigers from eating the mice and sheep? Where would you keep the birds?
- When you've finished your picture, show it to your family and tell them about your ideas.

RAINBOW SCAVENGER HUNT

- Do you know the colors of the rainbow? They are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and indigo (dark purple-blue).
- Ask everyone in your family to run and find something in your home that is red. Put the red things together in a neat pile.
- Then run and find something orange, then yellow, etc., searching for each color in turn.
- Thank God for making our world so bright and colorful.
- Then see how quickly you can put everything back where you found it—or where it really belongs!



MAKE A RAINBOW

Read Genesis 9:12-17.

- Cut a cloud shape from white cardstock.
- Gather together some colored foam, felt, ribbon, fabric, yarn, or paper in rainbow colors.
- On the back of the cloud stick a horizontal strip of double-sided sticky tape, or just use some glue.
- Stick strips of different colored materials onto the back of the cloud so they hang down in the same color order as a rainbow.
- Turn the cloud over and stick cotton balls or round cotton pads onto the cloud to make it fluffy.
- Punch a hole in the top of the cloud and hang it somewhere to remind you of God's special rainbow promise.

SHOWERS OF BLESSING!

When God sent a flood, there was water everywhere, and lots of rain, too. We often forget to thank God for water, even though we use it every day, and even though we can't live without it for more than a few days.



- Make a raindrop mobile or collage to thank God for all the different kinds of water that you enjoy, such as swimming pools, lakes, fresh drinking water, bathwater and shower water, water for your plants, and water to make plants grow, bubbles blow, and waterfalls flow.
- Cut raindrop shapes from white, gray, or blue paper, and write one kind of water you're thankful for on each drop.
- Cut a cloud shape from a white card and write on it, "Thank You, God, for water!"
- Use a hole punch and thread to hang your raindrops from the cloud, or stick the drops onto a sheet of paper to make a collage of watery thanks.




RAINBOW PRAISE POSTER

- Read Revelation 4:3 and discover where there's a rainbow in heaven.
 - Find a big sheet of white paper.
 - Draw seven curves on the paper, like the layers in a rainbow.
 - On each line write a sentence praising God using these different colored marker pens:
1. **Red**—I praise You, God, for loving me because . . .
 2. **Orange**—I praise You, God, for helping me by . . .
 3. **Yellow**—I praise You, God, for being an amazing King who . . .
 4. **Green**—I praise You, God, for creating our world, especially . . .
 5. **Blue**—I praise You, God, for making heaven for us, and I'm looking forward to . . .
 6. **Purple**—I praise You, God, for Jesus because . . .
 7. **Indigo**—I praise You, God, for my family because . . .

LOOKING AFTER GOD'S WORLD

Noah obeyed God and took care of the animals that God had created. How can you and your family help to take care of God's creations?

- Cut a big circle out of paper or cardstock.
- On one side draw a picture of the earth.
- On the other side write some of the ways that you and your family can help to take care of God's creation. Perhaps you can do more recycling, buy used clothes instead of new ones, put seeds out for hungry birds, plant wildflowers, or pack a shoebox for ADRA (see ADRA.org). 



Karen Holford writes from Scotland. She doesn't mind that it rains quite a lot where she lives, because that means there are more rainbows!

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE

www.ministerialassociation.org/spouses

SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL



"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Psalm 121:1



ON THE MOVE!

LIVING IN A PASTOR'S FAMILY MEANS

that you often move around and live in different cities and towns. Sometimes this can be fun because you can explore all kinds of new places and make new friends. Sometimes it can be tough because you have to leave your home, your school, and your friends and start all over again as a new kid in town. The wonderful thing is that God is with us wherever we go. He cares about us, He understands when we feel sad about leaving our friends and starting over again, and He never stops loving us. In Deuteronomy 31:8 it says, "And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

BIBLE MOVERS

Lots of people moved in the Bible. Here are just a few of the people who moved away from home. Can you find out where they went?

Terah, Abram and Sarai, and Lot moved from _____ to _____ (Genesis 11:31).

Rebekah moved from _____ to _____ (Genesis 24).

Jacob moved from _____ to _____ (Genesis 28:10).

Joseph (Jacob's son) moved from _____ to _____ (Genesis 37).

Ruth and Naomi moved from _____ to _____ (Ruth 1:22).

Daniel and his friends moved from _____ to _____ (Daniel 1).

Esther moved from _____ to _____ (Esther 2:7, 8).

Mary and Joseph moved from _____ to _____ and later to _____ (Matthew 2).

PRAYING FOR YOUR NEXT HOME

What would you like to pray about for your next home? Your new friends? Your next church? Even if your family isn't planning a move, you can still pray about the next place that God is preparing for your family. Talk about your hopes and dreams for your next move and write a prayer together. Fold a sheet of paper in half like a greeting card. Cut the top of the card into a roof shape so it looks like a house. Write your prayer inside the house and keep it safe. Take out your prayer occasionally and pray together with your family about your next move.





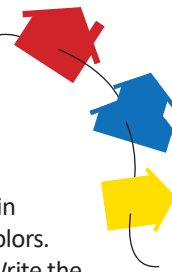
GIFTS EVERYWHERE!

Wherever we live, there are special people to love, places that are fun to visit, people who need to know God's love, and all kinds of great things to make life happy! Take a sheet of paper for each place where you have lived. Write the name of the town or city at the top of the paper or draw a picture of your home. Then think of all the wonderful people you knew, what you enjoyed about going to church, some of the fun memories you made in that place, and anything else you want to thank God for. Do this for each place you've lived, even if you've stayed in only one town. Wherever we live, God surrounds us with amazing gifts to discover and enjoy. I wonder what amazing surprises He's preparing for you in the next place you'll live!

JESUS: HOME BUILDER

Read John 14:1-3. Right now, Jesus is in heaven making new homes for His friends. I imagine that He knows all of our favorite things, and He's busy creating thousands of unique rooms to fit each one of us. Heaven is going to be so wonderful that we can't begin to imagine it! But we can still wonder what our personalized heavenly home might be like. One of my friends loves bears, and she imagines that Jesus will put a real cuddly bear in her room to snuggle whenever she wants a hug. Another friend loves his treehouse, and he imagines his heavenly home might be up a tree. Share some of your creative ideas together. Pray, thanking Jesus for making a special place for us that is far beyond anything we can imagine on earth!

WORDS ON THE STREET



Cut out lots of paper houses in different shapes, sizes, and colors. Lay them out in a long row. Write the words of John 14:1-3 on different houses. Then shuffle up the shapes and see how quickly you can arrange them in the correct order of the Bible passage. When you've learned the verses, decorate the houses and use them to create a garland for your home.

GOD'S PROMISE



Cut a sheet of card stock into the shape of a house. Write the words of Deuteronomy 31:8 on the house. Decorate the shape in any way you like. Punch a hole in the top and tie yarn or ribbon to make a hanging loop. Display your house to remind you that God is with you wherever you go.

MOVING GIFT



Do you know someone who's moving? Make a moving gift for them. Find an attractive box or bag and include some of these: a photo of you with an encouraging message on the back; something small for their new room; a large card or notebook filled with positive messages from their friends; something to remind them of a good time with you, such as a treat you both enjoyed or a small game you played together; some welcome

balloons for them to blow up when they arrive; a packet of tissues (just in case); a copy of Deuteronomy 31:8 decorated by you and put into a frame or made into a house hanger like the one described under the title "God's Promise"; a jar of earth from their garden so they will have a little piece of your town in their new place; a guidebook filled with great things for kids to do in their new area, city, or state (or write to the tourist office

in their new location and request some brochures); a voucher for their family to have a meal out in their new location; and anything else they might like. Ask your parents to help you write a prayer for your friend's family. Pray that they will soon settle and find peace, happiness, and friendship in their new place. Pop this prayer into the gift bag. Invite them over for a meal before they leave, have a special time of prayer for them, and give them the gift bag.

MOVING FEELINGS



Moving away from home can cause all kinds of feelings. But Jesus cares about all of our emotions, and He understands when we feel sad, afraid, excited, or stressed. Read Matthew 11:28, 29. Take a large sheet of paper. In the middle of the paper draw a big heart, and then divide the heart into four quarters. In each quarter write one of the following: "I am feeling sad about moving because . . ."; "I am feeling excited about moving because . . ."; "I am afraid or worried about moving because . . ."; and "I am feeling stressed about moving because . . ." Write

down some of your ideas and share them with your parents. Tell them how they can help you when you feel sad, worried, afraid, or stressed by everything you have to do. Also, tell them what you're excited about

GET PACKING!

One of my friends lived in a country troubled by war. Sometimes her family had to move very quickly to a new town to stay safe. She told me that all you can really own in the world is whatever you can carry in two grocery sacks, because that was all she could take with her. Give every person in your family two grocery sacks and ask them to choose what they would carry with them to a new place if that was all they could take. Set a timer for 30 minutes and get packing! When the time is up, look at what each person has packed. Tell each other why you chose the things in your bag. What would be good about owning only a few things? What would be difficult? Thank God that, at the moment, you can usually take everything you need and want with you when you move.



and how they can help you enjoy moving to a new place. When we understand each other's feelings, we can comfort, encourage, and help one another. And that's good for everybody in the family.

Karen Holford is the family ministries director for the Trans-European Division. She has lived in 20 different homes in her life.



OUR GOOD, Good Shepherd

PSALM 23 EXPERIENCE

Work with your family to create a Psalm 23 (NKJV) experience.

- Verse 1: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." This verse means that God provides everything you need. Cut some sheep shapes from white paper. Praise God for all the things He does to be a good shepherd to you. Write each of these things on separate sheep shapes to make a whole flock of good things He does to care for you, as shepherds care for their sheep.
- Verse 2: "He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters."



Lay something green on the floor or find some soft grass to lie on. Take time to rest on the grass and feel peaceful. Sing a song together or blow bubbles and imagine you are blowing all your troubles to God and He is taking care of them. Give everyone a drink of cool water. Thank God for rest, Sabbaths, being refreshed, and good water to drink.

- Verse 3: "He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." Use a large ball of string to make a pathway to follow through and around your home.
- Verse 4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." Ask an adult to blindfold you so that everything is dark. Let them take you on a walk. See how safe you feel when someone who loves you guides you, even when you can't see where you are going. Find a long stick, like a staff. Pass it around your family and share stories of God's care, comfort, love, and leadership when you have gone through challenges and difficult times together.
- Verse 5: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over." Set a table for your family and make a simple feast of your favorite fruits and bread. Ask an adult to dip their finger in a drop of oil and draw a tiny heart of oil on your forehead to remind you that you are God's beloved son or daughter. Pour water into a beautiful glass placed in a dish. Pour the water until it overflows the glass. God's love for us is so generous! Share stories of God's generous blessings with each other.
- Verse 6: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Make an earth-made-new home together out of whatever you have available. Or draw it on a sheet of paper. Draw each person in your family inside the house. Thank God for the wonderful gift of eternal life.



3D PSALM 23!

- Create a small model or scene for each verse of Psalm 23 using toys and other things you have around your home. Or go outside and make it out of natural things you can find on the beach, in the field or park, or in a forest, etc.
- Give each person in your family a different verse to illustrate. Or work together on one scene each day for a week or over six Sabbath afternoons or sunset worships. Or create a picture or collage to illustrate each verse, or even a short video if your family has the skills and equipment.
- How can you share your creations with your friends and family so they can experience the comforting and encouraging words of this psalm?

SHEPHERDING GAME

- Gather some soft cotton balls (or make tiny balls by gently scrunching tissue paper into little balls) and some drinking straws (or use other thin tubes or even a pleated paper fan).
- Scatter the cotton balls (sheep) over a shiny floor or the top of a table. Use some masking tape to make the outline of a sheep fold on the floor or in the middle of the table.
- Work on your own, or as a small team, to blow or fan all the sheep into the sheepfold area.
- It's not an easy task! The "sheep" can be difficult to get into the fold! How are we like sheep? How does God guide us gently in the right direction?



LOST SHEEP

- Choose your favorite Bible verse about sheep.
- Cut out enough paper sheep for you to write each word of the verse on a separate sheep.
- Ask an older person in your family to hide all the sheep in a room in your home or in the yard.
- Then see how quickly you can find all the sheep and put them in the right order to make the Bible verse. You can look for the sheep on your own or with a brother, sister, or friend.
- Once the sheep are arranged to make the verse, turn over one or two at a time and continue to repeat the verse until all the sheep are upside down and you can say the verse without any prompts!

THE GOOD SHEPHERD KNOWS YOU BY NAME

- Read John 10:1-5. God, our good, good shepherd, knows each of His children by name. He knows your name, your nickname, and many other things about you!
- Draw a sheep on a piece of strong paper or card stock and cut it out.
- Write your name on the front of the sheep.
- On the back of the sheep write a list of 10 amazing things God knows about you! What does He know that no one else knows? He knows everything about you, and He loves you so much! Nothing you can do can make Him love you more, or even make Him love you less! You are His precious sheep, and He cares for you!





SHEPHERDS IN THE BIBLE

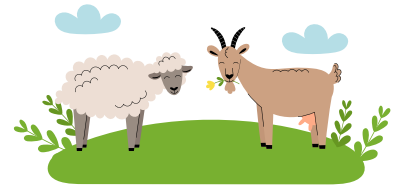
- Work with your family to list all the people in the Bible who were shepherds.
- See if you can find at least 10 named shepherds.
- Can you find 10 times in the Gospels where sheep or shepherds are mentioned?
- Now run around your home and find 10 sheep—toy sheep, pictures of sheep in books, and in any other places! Can't find 10? Invite everyone to make one or two sheep from things you have in your home. Gather them all together on a tray or in a basket.

"LOST" SHEEP



- Cut some sheep shapes out of card stock.
- Make a list of people you are praying for, hoping they will choose to follow Jesus.
- Write each name on a different sheep shape and thread them on yarn or ribbon to make a garland as a reminder to pray for them.

SHEEP AND GOATS



- In the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31-46) Jesus lists six kinds of things His followers, the sheep, might do for others.
- Read the parable and list what they do. Then make a list of ways you and your family could help people with a similar need in your community.

HOW "SHEEP" HELP OTHERS	HOW YOUR FAMILY CAN CARE FOR OTHERS IN A SIMILAR WAY

A SHEPHERD FOR YOUR FAMILY

- Read Isaiah 40:11. This is a beautiful verse about the way Jesus cares for children and their parents. Talk together about what this verse means to you and your family.
- Then create something to illustrate God's loving care for all of you and write this verse somewhere on your creation.
- Put it in a place where the words will remind you of God's tender care.

SHEEP FOR DINNER!

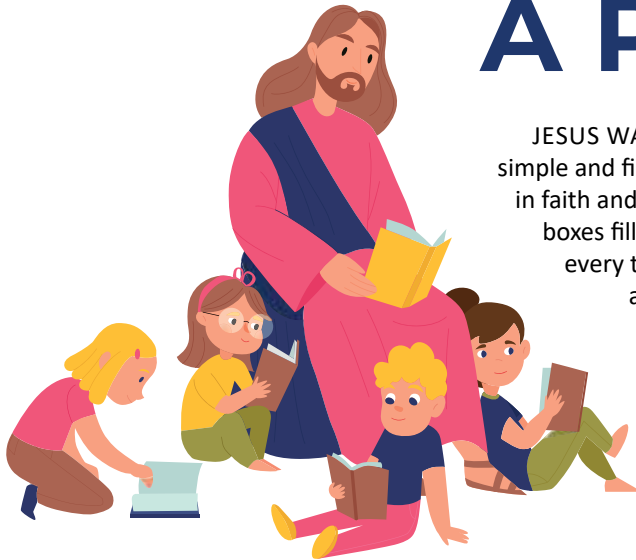
- Psalm 23:1 reminds us that everything we have comes from God and all our food is a gift from Him.
- Why not help to serve dinner one day? Arrange the food on each person's plate to look like a sheep, with a white fluffy body (rice, mashed potato, etc.), vegetable legs, eyes and ears, and green leafy vegetables to make a pasture under its feet.
- Thank God for all the ways He provides for your needs. **1**

Karen Holford lives in England. Isaiah 40:11 is one of her favorite verses. It helped her understand how much God cared for her and her little ones and that He was leading her gently and slowly while they were so small and dependent on her.

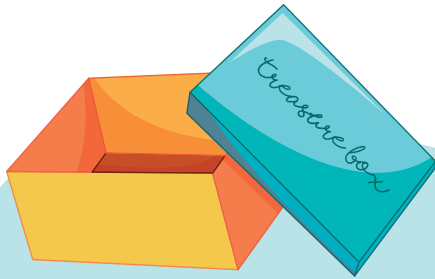
PAUSING WITH A PARABLE



SCAN FOR AUDIO



JESUS WAS AN AMAZING storyteller! His parables are simple and filled with important treasures to help us grow in faith and become more like Him. Parables are also like boxes filled with treasures, and we find new treasures every time we open them. Pause and think carefully about the stories that Jesus told, and see how much treasure you can find in each one! Here are some fun ways to pause with a parable.



PARABLE “TREASURE BOX”

- Find a small box with a lid—a little “treasure box.”
- Choose one of the parable stories.
- Copy the Bible story of the parable onto a paper strip that fits inside the box. Roll it up like a scroll and tie it with ribbon or twine.
- How might Jesus tell the story differently if He told it in your town today? Write your version of the parable on another strip of paper. Roll it up and tie it with a different color of twine.
- Put at least one thing in the box that reminds you of the parable, such as a seed, a coin, or a toy sheep. You can also add several small items that you can use to help you retell the story to your family.
- Make another treasure box to add to your collection whenever you explore another parable.

PARABLE QUESTIONS

- Write each of the following questions on different cards:
 - What do you like best about this story?
 - What are some of the treasures and ideas that are hiding in this story?
 - What do you think God is saying to you as you read this story?
 - What does this story help you to understand about God’s love?
- Each time you pause with a parable, think about the questions on the cards or discuss them with your family.





PARABLE CREATIVITY

- Gather creative materials such as paper, glue, church magazines, stickers, marker pens, pencils, fabric scraps, and natural materials.
- Keep them in a box so they are ready to use whenever you need them.
- Create something that shows what you have learned from the parable, such as artwork, a poem, or your version of the parable—whatever brings you joy or whatever the Holy Spirit inspires you to make.



SLOW SCENES

- Pause and take time to make different scenes from a parable. You could draw a cartoon to tell the story or create 3D scenes using your toys, household objects, or natural materials.
- Show the scenes to your family and tell the story.
- Photograph the scenes to make a visual story to share on social media or use the scenes to tell a children's story at church.
- If you can access the internet, ask an adult to help you look for animated Bible stories created with plastic toy bricks. There are many examples to explore and watch.



PERSONALIZED PARABLES

- Imagine you are one of the characters in a parable.
- You might be the farmer who scattered seeds, the woman who lost a coin, a servant of the king who had a great feast, the father of the prodigal son, or the man the Good Samaritan helped.
- Re-write the story from the perspective of this character.
- What did you learn from pausing with the parable in this way? How did it change your understanding of the story?



STUDY SOME PARABLES WITH YOUR FAMILY

Here are a few more ideas to help you and your family pause with the parables.

THE PRECIOUS PEARL (MATTHEW 13:45, 46)

- Read the parable of the precious pearl.
- This story is often read as if we are the ones who sell everything to follow Jesus. But what if each of us is a precious pearl, and Jesus is the merchant who sold everything to “buy” us because He loves us so much?
- Pearls come in many colors, like white, cream, gray, and pink. Cut a large circular “pearl” from paper. Write the two Bible verses of the story in a spiral from the outside edge to the center of the pearl. Write lightly with a pencil to make sure all the words fit inside the circle. You can trace over the words with ink or marker if you would like.
- Walk through your house and imagine selling everything you own, even your home, to buy a pearl. What does this say about the love that Jesus has for you?
- Think of all the things that Jesus gave up for us to show how precious we are to Him. On the reverse of the pearl, write the words and phrases of gratitude and praise that come to your mind as you understand how precious you are.
- Put your “pearl” where it will remind everyone how precious you are to God.

THE GREAT FEAST (LUKE 14:15–24)

- Read the parable of the great feast. Read the earlier verses in this chapter to discover why Jesus told this story.
- Any meal shared with love can be a feast. After reading this parable, who would your family like to invite to a “feast”?
- Draw a picture of your table showing all the food you would serve at your feast and the people you would like to invite.
- What are some sad excuses people give for not accepting God’s loving invitation?
- What kind of invitation has God “sent” to you? What answer would you like to give to God?

THE LOST COIN (LUKE 15:8–10)

- Read the story of the woman who lost an important coin.
- Cut out a large circle for each person in your family. Draw a picture of a family member on one side of the paper circle and write their name around the edge. Write “Lost and Found!” on the other side of the coin.
- Ask an adult to hide the paper coins in an area of your home. See how quickly you or everyone else in your family can find the coins. Make sure no one is lost!
- Hold hands in a circle around the paper coins and thank Jesus that He has a plan to save each of us.
- Hunt for some spare coins and buy something for a lonely or sad person to let them know how precious they are to God. ■

Karen Holford is the family, children’s, and women’s ministries director of the Trans-European Division. Her favorite parable is the story of the prodigal son because it reminds her of God’s great love for all His children.



Peacemakers!

YOU CAN HELP PEOPLE BE FRIENDS AGAIN. HERE'S HOW.

JESUS SAID PEACEMAKERS are so special that they will be called the children of God (Matthew 5:9)! It takes courage to be a peacemaker. Whenever you help people to sort out their arguments and make friends again, you are helping them to feel God's love. The worship activities on the next few pages will help you to develop your secret peacemaking skills.



WHAT ARE YOU FIGHTING ABOUT?

Have you ever wondered what you fight about most? And how you could stop that fight next time around?

Here are some things people fight about. Add some other arguments you have with your friends and family. Then write down one thing you could do differently the next time to stop the fight from getting worse.

WHAT WE FIGHT ABOUT:	WHAT I COULD TRY NEXT TIME:
When we both want the same toy.	
Being asked to do something I don't want to do.	
When something seems unfair.	
When someone messes with my stuff.	
When someone says something I don't like.	
When we both want to go first.	





REMEMBER THE POWER OF ONE!

It takes only one person to start a fight—
and any selfish person can do that!

But it takes only one courageous, wise,
and kind person to stop a fight!

Which one do you want to be?

PEACE-GIFTS

Read Proverbs 18:16. Talk with your family about this verse. Has anyone ever given or received gifts to make up after an argument?

Think about the last argument you had. What nice thing could you do or what could you give to the other person to show that you want to be friends again? Draw your action or gift inside this gift box.

PEACEMAKING ABIGAIL

Read the story of Abigail in 1 Samuel 25. She prevented a big fight between her foolish husband and King David by giving peace-gifts.

How much food did she give to David and his soldiers? Write the numbers below:

_____ loaves of bread

_____ measures (seahs) of roasted corn

_____ bottles of wine (grape juice)

_____ clusters of raisins

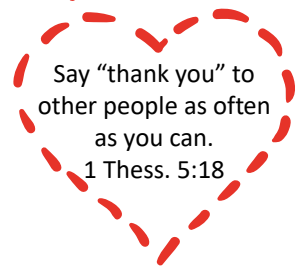
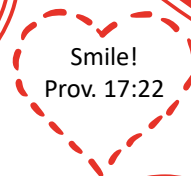
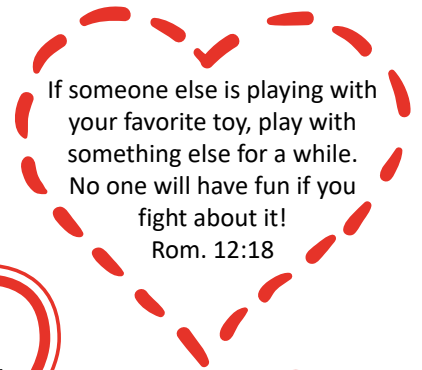
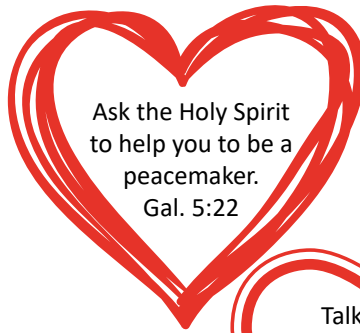
_____ sheep

_____ cakes of pressed figs



BE A SECRET PEACEMAKER!

Here are some things you can do to have fewer arguments. Circle all the ideas you want to try. Color in the heart after you have tried the idea and it helped.



LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Learn this great Bible verse to help you to be a peacemaker:

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.”

James 1:19, NIV

“Everyone should be quick to listen,

(Hold the bottom of your ears as if you are listening, and then run fast in one place.)

slow to speak

(Walk slowly in place, opening and shutting your hand slowly next to your mouth as an action for speaking.)

and slow to become angry.”

(Walk even more slowly in place. Say the words more and more quietly and slowly. When you say the word “angry,” jump up in the air and say it loudly.)

Practice this verse together with a family member and then talk about what it means. How does listening to other people help us to be good peacemakers?



THE LISTENING SECRET

One cool way to stop a shouting kind of argument is by putting James 1:19 into action and listening carefully to the other person. It sounds funny, but it can really work! Practice your good listening skills at home and see what happens!

- Listen to your friend. Let them know you're really listening by repeating back to them what you heard. Say things like, "Let me just check that I've got that." "So you're saying that . . ." "OK, so when this happens you feel . . . ? Is that right?"
- Find out more. Ask questions such as, "Tell me more about that so I can understand it better."
- Help your friend calm down by saying things such as, "That sounds tough. I'm really sorry you're so frustrated and upset."
- Do something kind: "Can I do anything to help you?"
- If you both want different things say, "OK, so you want this [describe what the person wants], and I want this [describe what you want]. How can we sort out our problem together? Or maybe we need to find a grownup to help us."



SORTING IT OUT

Here are some people in the Bible who disagreed, quarreled, or stopped being friends with each other. Find out what they fought about. Then discover how they solved their problems and made friends again.

Abraham and Lot (Genesis 13)

Isaac's wells (Genesis 26:12-33)

Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25; Genesis 27:1-46; Genesis 32, 33)

Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 37; Genesis 42-45)

PRAYING FOR PEACE

- Look through a newspaper or search the Internet to find a country where currently there is a war or conflict. Find out all you can about this country and pray for peace.
- If you know people who fight and argue a lot, pray for them too. Pray that they will find peaceful and kind ways to sort out their problems.
- Write your peace prayers on cardstock doves and hang them from a branch, or make a garland with them. Add Bible verses about peace too.
- What do you like best about each of the stories?
- What is the most important lesson in each story for you?
- Which person in the story is most like you?
- What can you learn about being a peacemaker from each of these stories? 7

Karen Holford is a family therapist and director of the Family Ministries Department for the Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



RIPPLES OF HAPPINESS!

SHARE A LOT OF SMILES

START A CIRCULAR SMILE!

Every morning, when Mommy opened her eyes, she imagined God smiling at her with love, and it made her smile too. When she went to wake up Tommy, she kissed him and gave him a great big hug. Tommy smiled back and gave her a great big kiss!

At breakfast, his little sister Sarah was worried about her spelling test, so Tommy prayed for her and found fun ways to teach her all the words. She began to smile again.

On the playground, James was sad because his pet hamster had escaped from its cage. Sarah prayed that his hamster would be safe, and then she played ball with him. Soon James was smiling again.

James' friend, Katie, was sad because she forgot her lunchbox. James shared his sandwiches with her to make her happy again.

When Katie's dad met her at the school gates, he looked very worried. Katie told him how much she loved him, and he smiled again.

They stopped at a gas station on the way home, and a lady was sad because she had forgotten her purse and couldn't pay for her gas. Katie's dad helped her, and she smiled again. And that lady was Tommy's mommy!

Can you see how the smile Mommy shared was passed around a big circle and came right back to her? Pray that your kindness and smiles will be passed on from person to person, and maybe they will make a big circle and come back to bless you too!

Draw a picture of the smile being shared with each person in the story!



A GIRL WHO SHARED JOY



Read the amazing story of Naaman's maid in 2 Kings 5:1–19. The little girl had been taken away from her family. Even though she was very sad, she decided to work hard and help her new mistress. When Naaman became sick with leprosy, she told the family about the prophet Elisha and her wonderful God. Naaman visited Elisha, and his leprosy was healed! How do you think Naaman treated the little girl when he came back healed? How did his wife feel when she saw that his leprosy was gone?

Draw a happiness circle for this little story, showing how joy was shared.

You could also act out the story or write the story as if you were the little girl.

Do you know a sick person? How can you pray for them and bless them?

GOD SMILES OVER YOU!

Did you know that God smiles over you, soothes you with His love, and sings happy songs over you?

Read Zephaniah 3:17 and talk with your family about this beautiful description of God. Then draw a picture to illustrate the verse and remind yourself that God delights in you!

A LITTLE BIT HAPPIER ...



Try playing this game on your own, or with your family:

Every time you talk to someone, aim to leave them feeling a little bit happier than when you met them.

Smile, be helpful, speak kindly, and say something encouraging.

You are sharing ripples of happiness and helping people to feel God's wonderful love for them.

BEING KIND MAKES YOU HAPPY!



Did you know? Helping makes you happy! God designed your brain so that whenever you help someone or make them feel better, you feel happy too! Amazing!

Next time you see someone sad or someone who needs help, do something nice for them and see how it makes you both happy.

Create a fun poster to remind everyone in your family to be kind to each other and share their love and smiles with others!



A BOY WHO SHARED JOY

A little boy shared joy with thousands of people, just by giving his little lunch to Jesus! Read the story in John 6:1–13. Draw his lunch in the center of a sheet of paper. Then draw ripples around the food and say who was blessed by his kindness. The boy shared his lunch with Jesus—the first ripple. What are the second, third, and even fourth ripples of joy that were spread by his kindness? He did one small,

kind thing, and he made thousands of people happy! Tell each other how this story makes you happy too!

Act out this story together with bread and fish-shaped food.

Write the little boy's diary for the most amazing day of his life!

Do you know people who are hungry? How can you share your food with them?



KIND WORDS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

How long does it take to say something kind and make people feel loved? Can you guess?

Someone measured the time it took for doctors to show care for their patients. They discovered that it only took 1 minute to say something kind and soothing, and it never took longer than 2 minutes! Many of the patients still remembered their kind words 6 months later!

Search the stories of Jesus to find short messages He said that made people feel loved and happy.

Make a list of kind things you could say and do in less than a minute for your family, neighbors, teachers, and friends. Your kind words can make a big difference!



SMILEY REMINDER

Use what you can find around your home to make a "smiley reminder" for your school bag, key ring, bicycle, or family car.

Create something sturdy and fun that reminds you to be cheerful and encourages your friends and family.

Whenever you smile, it makes you feel happy and confident, and you will look more beautiful or handsome! 📌

Karen Holford likes playing the game of leaving people happier than when she finds them! It makes the world a happier place, and it makes her smile too!

Spending Time With Jesus— Your Best Forever Friend!

JESUS MADE YOU, HE LOVES YOU, AND HE HAS AMAZING IDEAS AND STORIES TO SHARE WITH YOU. HE EVEN HAS SOME SPECIAL WORK FOR YOU TO DO, SO MORE PEOPLE CAN DISCOVER HOW MUCH HE LOVES THEM, TOO.

WHEN WE HAVE A SPECIAL FRIEND, WE LOVE BEING WITH THAT PERSON. HERE ARE SOME GREAT WAYS TO SPEND TIME WITH JESUS, YOUR BEST FOREVER FRIEND.

THE CHALLENGE

Spending time with Jesus can change your life! Try spending 5-10 minutes a day reading your Bible, doing something you enjoy based on what you have read, and praying to Jesus. Do it for a month, and look for the difference it makes in your life. It can help you to be a better friend; make wiser choices; and feel happier, more thankful, and less worried.

FIND A BIBLE

One of the secrets to spending special time with Jesus each day is having a Bible you understand and enjoy. Some Bibles have more pictures, some have activity ideas, and some have questions and stories to think about. Go to a store with your parents and look at the Bibles until you find one you like best.

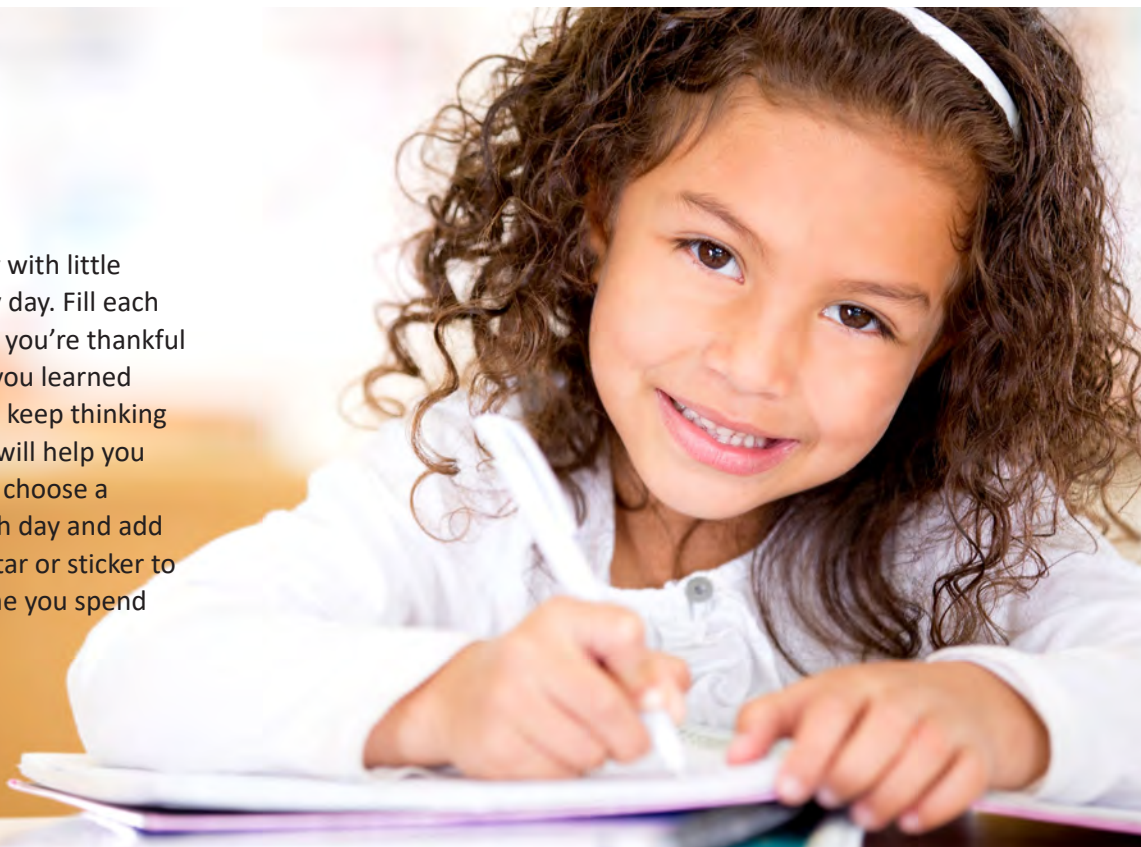
DIY WORSHIP KIT

Ask your parents to help you make a do-it-yourself (DIY) worship kit. Buy a box of index cards and divide them into two packs. Write creative ways of exploring a Bible passage on half the cards. Write Bible passages or story references on the other cards. Each day pick one card from each pack and do whatever the cards say. If the combination won't work, pick another card.



DIARY DATES

Find a diary or calendar with little spaces to write in every day. Fill each space with three things you're thankful for and one new thing you learned about Jesus. If it's hard, keep thinking and praying, and Jesus will help you know what to write. Or choose a favorite Bible verse each day and add it to your diary. Add a star or sticker to your calendar every time you spend time alone with Jesus.



EXPLORING STORIES

Here are some ways to bring Bible stories to life and imagine you're really there:

- Make or draw a scene from a Bible story. Use toy people and bricks to make Bible scenes, and tell the story to your family.
- Draw a picture of your favorite part of the story. Then write a few lines about why you chose this part. Keep your pictures in a journal or folder.
- Imagine that you are really in the story and think about what you would see, hear, smell, feel, and taste.
- Write a short journal entry as if you were watching Jesus perform miracles and tell stories. What would you say to Jesus? What questions would you like to ask Him, and how would you want to praise Him?
- Think about the characters in the story. Who made good choices and who made bad choices? How can they help you to make wise choices in your life?
- Ask yourself, *How does this story inspire me to be kind and loving to someone else?* Think of one thing to try, and then do it.

TALK TO JESUS

Make your prayer time more interesting with these simple ideas:

- Simple prayer outline:
 - Tell Jesus how much you love Him.
 - Thank Him for at least three things He has given you today.
 - Say you're sorry for at least one thing you have done wrong today.
 - Ask Him to help you, your family, and at least one other person.
 - Tell Him again how much you love Him!
 - Tell Jesus 26 things you're thankful for—one for each different letter of the alphabet.
- Fill a bag with different things that remind you to pray for people you know or for things your family needs. Choose one object each day and pray for the person or situation.

Spending Time With Jesus—Your Best Forever Friend!

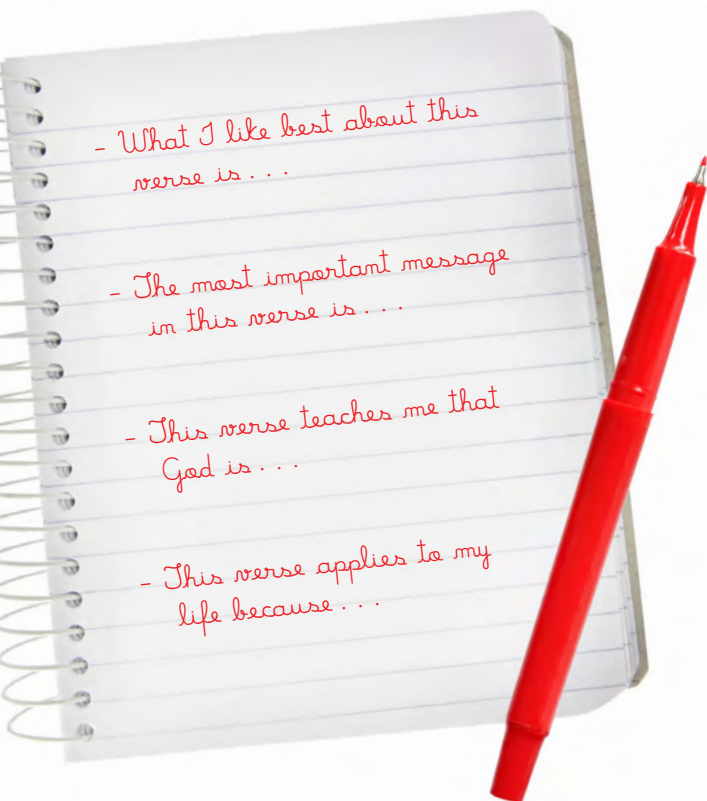
JUST A VERSE OR TWO

Pray a simple prayer before you start reading. Ask Jesus to be with you as you read and to help you learn more about Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and inspire you. Then read a few verses each day. Read slowly and carefully. Think about what each verse means. Read until you find a verse that says something special to you.

Then try one of the following activities:

- Imagine you're designing a poster with that Bible verse on it. Find a picture that really helps to illustrate the verse. Or design your own poster using your favorite art, collage, and drawing techniques.
- Write the verse on a card or in a notebook. Then answer the following questions on the card or in your book:

- Imagine you're trying to explain this verse to someone who speaks another language. What pictures would you draw, or what action would you do, to help the person understand the Bible verse? Show your ideas to your family, or act out the verse and see if they can understand what it means.
- Find some objects that illustrate a verse and place them in order. Then see if your family can guess the verse you've chosen. For example, you could illustrate Psalm 119:105 by arranging a Bible, a torch, some shoes, and a map. (Can you guess which verse this is without looking it up?)
- Create your own secret code and write your verses in code.
- Cut the words and letters for your verse out of newspapers and magazines, then create a collage.
- Write a Bible verse on a small card and carry it in your pocket. If you're learning the verse, write it in code—just the first and last letter of each word—to help you remember the words.
- Choose a small object to remind you of a Bible verse, then carry it in your pocket. Think about the verse when you're walking, waiting, and resting. Listen to what Jesus wants to say to you. 7



Karen Holford loves to find creative ways to make worship a happy time for children and their families.

FOR EXTRA HELP AND IDEAS TRY THESE RESOURCES:

100 Creative Prayer Ideas for Kids, Karen Holford, Pacific Press, 2003.

100 Quick and Easy Worship Ideas for Kids, Karen Holford, Pacific Press, 2004.

100 Creative Ways to Learn Memory Verses, Karen Holford, Review and Herald, 2010.

Stuff!

DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE you have too much stuff? Toys that get all over your floor and clothes that burst out of your closet? You could get a home with a bigger bedroom or bigger closets—but you'd probably still have too much stuff.

Selfishness leads to wanting more and more stuff, which hurts our world, our families, and ourselves. God has a better plan: unselfish generosity, kindness to others, and being more creative and contented with the things we already have.

MORE-STUFF AND LESS-STUFF MAPS

Make a "more-stuff map." Draw yourself in the middle of the page. Imagine that you want to get lots of things. In the four corners of the paper, draw pictures of people who suffer when we use up the world's resources. You might include the factory workers who receive low wages for making your things, needy families who have little to eat or wear, your parents who work hard to earn money for your home and toys, your brothers and sisters who need things too, and others. Draw arrows from yourself to the other people and write down how getting too much stuff for yourself can hurt others.

Now make a "less-stuff map" and do the same again. This time draw and write how the other people benefit when you choose to get less stuff. Consider how your unselfishness can benefit the world, your family, and yourself.

"THANK YOU" PRAYER WALK

Walk around your home with your family. Thank God for at least 20 things that you are grateful for in each room. Then draw a large outline of your home and write on it some things you're thankful for in each room. Have lots of stuff? Choose one room at a time and thank God for every single thing in the room. If you don't feel very thankful for something, perhaps it's time to give it away!





BAD ATTITUDES AND BIGGER BARNES!

Jesus told a parable about a man who wanted more stuff. Instead of sharing with others and feeding the hungry, he just kept building bigger barns because he wanted to keep everything for himself. Read his story in Luke 12:16-21.

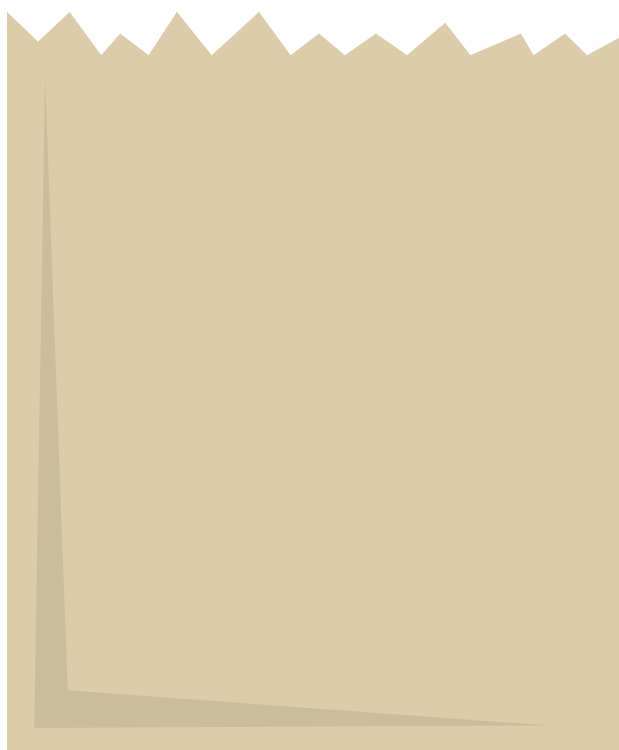
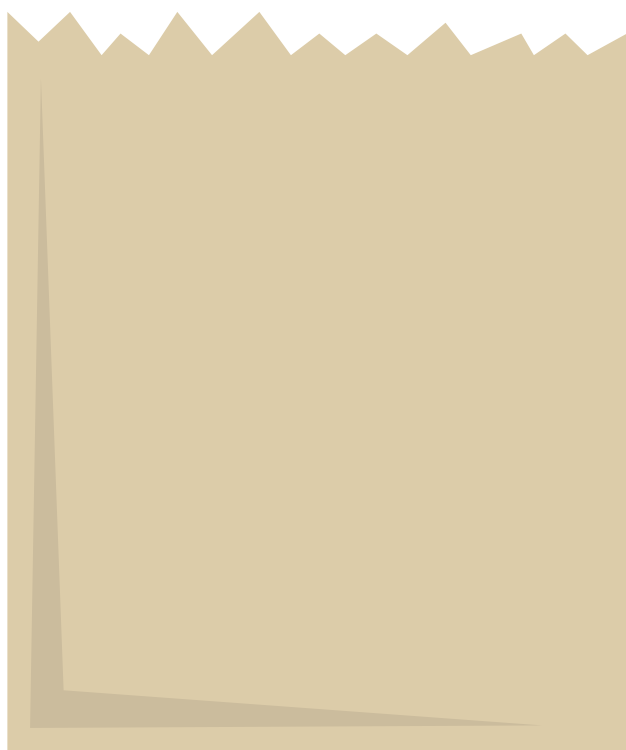
Find a sheet of paper and draw a cartoon version of this story. Then imagine that the farmer is kind and generous instead and draw a different ending to his story. Show both stories to your family and talk about it. What's the most important message



for you and your family in the parable of the bigger barns? What does Jesus want us to do instead? (See Matthew 6:25-34; 25:31-40.)

TWO GROCERY BAGS

I knew a girl who lived in a country where her family needed to move around and hide to stay safe. She told me that she could only own what she could carry in two grocery bags. Every time they moved she had to give the rest away or leave it behind. Think about everything you own. If you could have only what you could carry in two grocery bags, what would you keep? Draw or write your list in the bags below. Talk about this with your family. How much do you really need? What would be harder if you had less stuff? And what would be easier?





UNUSUAL GIFTS!

The more content we are with what we have, the more generous we can be with others. What's the most unusual gift you ever received?

Write it here: _____

People in the Bible sometimes gave each other unusual presents. Search your Bible to unwrap some of these odd gifts. Look up the story on the gift tag, and then write the gifts inside the box.





THE DAY I SHARED MY LUNCH!

Read about the boy who shared his lunch with Jesus in John 6:5-13. He was probably very hungry, just like everyone else in the crowd. He could have easily eaten everything in his lunch sack. But he chose to share his bread and fish, and something amazing happened! Imagine you are this boy. Write the story of your experience in your journal. Or imagine that you have arrived home carrying a basketful of leftovers for your own family. What would you tell your family that evening? What do you think their reactions would be? How would you all respond to Jesus after this?

TRY THESE AT HOME!

- Be generous with Mom and Dad! Find or make something to give to them. Do the same for your brothers and sisters. Surprise them with a gift just because you love them!
- Count exactly how many books and toys you have. Then count how many socks, underpants, pants, shirts, sweaters, skirts, and dresses you have. (It's OK to write 0 next to the dresses and skirts if you are a boy!) Did you realize that you had so much stuff? Thank God for your blessings, and then give some things away to children who need them more.
- Bored with your toys? Try being creative with boxes and tape or things you can find in nature. Or ask Mom and Dad to download some Lego challenge cards for you to try.
- Feel like buying more stuff? You'll get more for your money if you go to a yard sale or thrift store.
- Want something? Write it on your wish list with the date. After one month, look at the list and see if you still want it as badly. What have you learned?
- When you go to the store and feel like buying something, ask Mom or Dad what you can buy to help someone else. Notice how good it feels to be generous. **7**

Karen Holford loves having real fun with her three young grandchildren.



GIVING
MAKES YOU
HAPPY!

Memorize Luke 6:38 and make up some actions for it. Or go into the kitchen and act it out with cups and grains. Perform the verse for your family. What experiences have you and your family had with being generous, and discovering that God is generous with you too? What could you and your family do to put this verse into action? How does this verse help you when you feel tempted to be selfish?



The Best Gift Ever!

WHEN GOD SENT JESUS to earth as a tiny baby, He gave us the best gift ever! Jesus came to help us understand how much God loves us. That's amazing! Let's explore the story of Jesus' birth together.



During the story of Jesus' birth, angels keep appearing in the most unexpected places. Read the stories in Matthew 1:18 to 2:15 and Luke 1:1 to 2:21, and count how many times angels spoke to people.

The angels often start by saying, "Don't be afraid!" and then they share some really good news. Cut out the shape of an angel using this pattern as a guide. Make sure your angel is big enough to write on. Write a good-news message on the angel and give it to someone who needs encouragement.



BRIGHT AND MORNING STARS

God sent a star to help the wise men find Jesus. What do you do to help yourself find Jesus? Search your Bible, looking for some of Jesus' names. Cut stars from white cards. On each star write a name of Jesus in a bright, attractive way. Decorate the stars and punch a small hole in each one. Use white thread to hang them at different heights from a circle of wire or a thin branch. Hang your star mobile where it will remind you to think about Jesus.





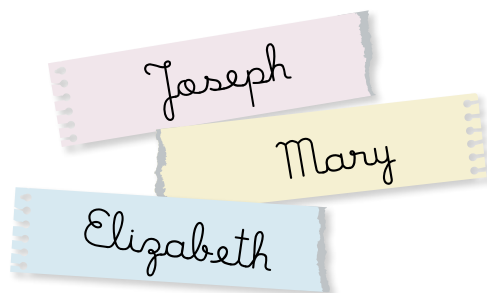
GIVE A STAR

Make stars to share with your neighbors. These could be star-shaped cookies, folded paper stars, or any other stars you would like to make. Try rolling out air-drying clay so that it is ¼-inch or 5 mm thick and press rubber stamps, leaves, pine branches, or thick lace into the clay to make a pattern. Use a narrow straw to make a neat hole in one point of each star. Package your finished stars with encouraging Bible verses and give them to your neighbors.

ALL KINDS OF GIFTS

Match the names of the people below with the gifts they gave to Jesus. Some people gave Him more than one gift. And some gifts were given by more than one person. Can you spot the selfish person who didn't give Him any gifts?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Mary | Perfume |
| Joseph | A shelter |
| Angels | A place to grow into a baby |
| Shepherds | A family |
| Herod | A warm welcome |
| Wise Men | A song |
| Elizabeth | Protection and safety |
| Innkeeper | Gold |



EVERY STORY IS DIFFERENT

Write the name of each of these characters on separate pieces of paper. Put them into a small bag. Pick out a character and tell the story of Jesus' birth as if you were that person. Some of the characters are not in the actual Bible story, but you can imagine a story that they might tell.

- Mary's mom or dad
 - Joseph
 - Mary
 - Elizabeth
- A young shepherd boy
- An angel in the choir
- The wife of one of the wise men
- The innkeeper





MAKE A SCENE

Create a scene from the story of Jesus' birth. Use toys, plastic brick sets, household items, natural materials, colored and folded paper, or old Christmas cards.

- The angel visits Mary
- Elizabeth and Mary greet each other
- Bethlehem—the town with no spare rooms
- Baby Jesus in the stable
- Shepherds on the hills
- A choir of angels
- The wise men and their gifts



LET'S PRAY

Use the story of Jesus' birth to help you pray for different people and their needs. Here are some ideas:

- Young families and parents with new babies
- People who are traveling
- People who are searching for Jesus
- People who work at night, like the shepherds
- People who are afraid
- People who are homeless, like Mary and Joseph
- People who don't understand about Jesus, like Herod

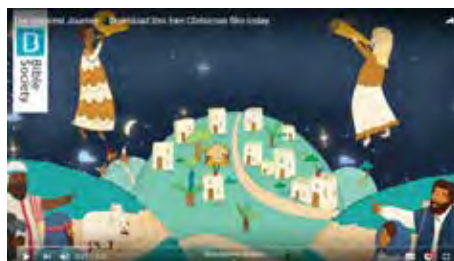
As you pray, welcome Jesus joyfully into your own heart and home, and thank God for His amazing gift!

FULL OF WONDER

"Wonder" together about the wonderful story of Jesus' birth. Ask each other:

- "I wonder what you like best about the story of Jesus' birth?"
- "I wonder what the most important message in this story is for you?"
- "I wonder who you would most like to be if you were a character in this story?"
- "I wonder what this story tells you about God's love for you?"

There are no right or wrong answers to wondering questions, but they help us to think about the story in a different way and apply it to our lives.



THE GREATEST JOURNEY

The United Kingdom's Bible Society has made a lovely animation about Jesus' birth called "The Greatest Journey." You can search for it on the Internet, or visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggFqPfbry_o. Enjoy watching it together!



The Best Gift Ever!

SHOWING GOD'S LOVE

Jesus came to the world as a tiny baby to show us how much God loves us. In the story of His birth we find different ways of showing God's love today. Prayerfully choose one of them and work with your family to do something kind for someone else:

- Welcome a baby in a poor family.
- Give special presents to children who are poor.
- Support a project that helps the homeless.
- Care for families who are refugees.
- Invite someone into your home who is a long way from their own home.
- Sing to bring joy to others.
- Share the good news of Jesus with other people.
- Support an ADRA project.



SO MANY IDEAS!

- Gather all your books about Jesus' birth and read them with your family. Then write and illustrate your own mini-book about His birth.
- Write a really happy song about Jesus' birth. Sing it with your family as if you are a choir of angels! Or use the words of the angels' song and compose your own music.
- Act out the story of Jesus' birth with your family. Make up your own words, find toy animals for the stable, and dress up using whatever you can find in your home. You could video your story to share with others or present it at a senior center. You can even search online for short scripts to help you to tell the story.
- Make a beautiful poster for your home or car window that shares the good news of Jesus' birth with those who pass by.
- Make a miniature nativity scene by downloading the pattern from <http://madebyjoel.com/2013/12/paper-city-nativity-scene-joyfully-expanded.html>. (Scroll down.)



WORSHIP WHILE YOU EAT

The Trans-European Division has designed some dinner placemats full of family worship ideas. You can find them at <https://ted.adventist.org/family-ministries/resources>.

Scroll down the page until you find the placemats. Download the designs you want. There is one about the birth of Jesus, one about generosity, one about gratitude, and several other designs. Use them for family mealtimes during the holiday season. Print off extra sets and laminate them to give as gifts.

Karen Holford is the Family Ministries director of the Trans-European Division, and she likes to help families explore the Bible together.

Think Happy



THE APOSTLE PAUL was in prison when he wrote a letter to his friends in Philippi. His life was tough, and he knew he didn't have long to live. But he managed to stay positive and hopeful in spite of the challenges.

At the end of his letter, in Philippians 4, Paul shares some of his happiness secrets. Let's discover what they are so that we can stay hopeful and happy when our life gets tough.

POSITIVE PAUL

Search for Paul's happiness secrets in Philippians 4, and write down the Bible verse where each secret is found.

PAUL'S 12 TIPS FOR BEING HAPPY IN THE TOUGH TIMES	VERSE
Rejoice and be happy all the time because God loves you.	4
Let God's peace fill your heart and mind.	
When you learn something about God, put it into practice in your life.	
Be content with whatever you have and wherever you are.	
Instead of worrying, pray and ask God to help you.	
Treat other people kindly and gently.	
Try to get along with other people.	
Be thankful for everything.	
Share with others in need.	
Remember that whatever happens, God is with you.	
Think about things that are lovely, true, right, and pure.	
Trust in God to give you strength when you need it.	

IN GOD'S HANDS

Put your worries in God's hands:

- Fold a piece of typing paper in half.
- Place your left hand on the paper with your little finger against the fold.
- Draw around your hand and cut it out to make a hand-shaped card.
- Open the card and write your worries inside so that they are placed in God's hands.
- When you feel worried again, remember that you gave your worries to God; ask Him to help you.

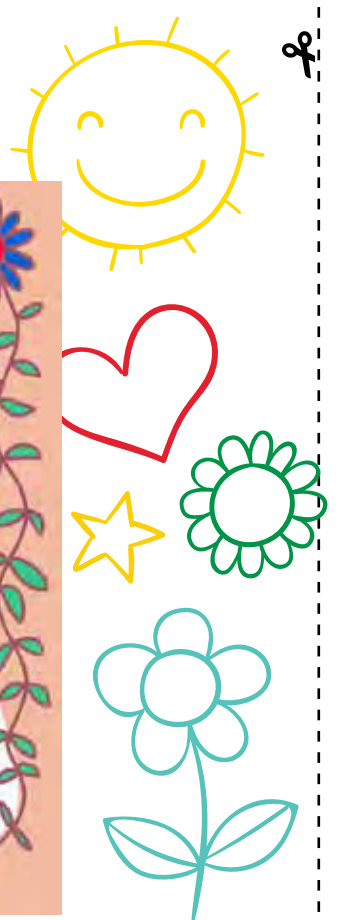


- Share your worries with an adult. Tell your parent, teacher, or caregiver what you are worried about. They may be able to help you.
- Think about possible solutions. List some different things you could do to help make things better.
- Get busy! Find something you enjoy doing—something fun, something creative, or something active. When we're busy doing something interesting or fun, it helps us to forget our worries for a while.



PEACE—BE STILL!

- Read John 14:27 in your favorite Bible.
- Make a poster to remind your family of the peace that Jesus gives us. You could write the words of this verse in blue wavy lines across the bottom of the paper so they look like water, and then draw Jesus in a boat. Or write the words on a white paper dove, or on a picture of the world.
- As you work on your peace poster, learn the words of the Bible verse so you can repeat them in your mind whenever you feel troubled.
- Put the poster where it will help you and your family to feel peaceful.
- Which other Bible verses help you to feel the peace of Jesus?



HAPPY PEOPLE

Some people are like Paul. They know how to stay positive and close to God in every situation.

- Ask the people in your family and your church about the things that helped them through the tough times in their lives.
- How did their faith, friends, and positive attitude help them to stay strong? What Bible verses comforted and strengthened them?
- What can you and your friends learn from these people?



THE LOVE SIGN

- People who use sign language have a special hand sign that means "love." Find out how to make the hand sign for love.
- Try making different heart shapes with your hands and see how many you can make.
- Create a secret sign with your family that means "I love you!" Then create another sign for the special love that Jesus has for us.

CALM DOWN

Sometimes we can feel very frustrated, annoyed, or upset. That's normal, because we live in a world where lots of hurtful things happen.

List some things that help you to calm down when you feel frustrated or angry. Here are some simple activities that help children and grown-ups to calm down. Try a few and see which ones work best for you.

- Pray. Put the whole mess in God's hands and ask Him to help you sort it out.
- Drink a glass of cool water.
- Blow bubbles. The slow blowing helps you to calm down. No bubbles? Just pretend to blow the biggest bubbles ever, and it will really calm you down. Maybe it will make you smile too!
- Find someone to talk to, someone who really listens well.
- Ask someone for a hug.
- Do something energetic, such as bouncing on a trampoline or running around the park.
- Have a warm bubble bath.
- Watch something funny.
- Distract yourself by working on a hobby or doing something fun or challenging.
- Read a good book.



MAKE AN EMOTIONAL PIE



Sometimes life is complicated or sad, and our feelings are all mixed up inside. When this happens, make an emotional pie to help you think about what you are feeling and to let other people know how they can help you.

- Draw a big circle on a piece of paper. Imagine it's like a pie, and each slice is a different feeling and a different size.
- Think about how much sadness, happiness, fear, worry, anger, or whatever you are feeling right now. If you are very sad, make that slice bigger. One girl even made a slice for all the feelings she had that she didn't have words for yet.
- Write the name of the feeling on the pie slice or next to it.
- Color the slices to match your feelings.
- Next to each pie slice write what you would like other people to do to support you when you have that feeling.
- Show your pie to a parent or caregiver and talk about your pie with them.

THANKS!

When we say thank-you to God and others, it usually helps us to feel happier too! Try one of these:

- Sit in your bedroom and make a list of everything in your room that you're grateful for: clothes, books, toys, furniture, heating, etc. See if you can hit 100!
- Walk down a street or in a park with your family. Take turns finding things along your way to be thankful for. Speak them out loud: "Thank You, God, for the tree that gives us shade." "Thank You for the ambulance going by to help someone." "Thank You for the birds singing in the trees. Help me to notice their music."
- Keep a gratitude journal and write down three things you are thankful for every night before you go to bed—then you will go to bed feeling happier!
- Make a thank-you card to leave in a restaurant with a generous tip.



A KINDNESS A DAY

Have you heard the expression "A kindness a day keeps the gloomies away"? It's true! One of the best ways to be happy is to do something kind for someone else.

- Ask an adult to print off a calendar page with a month of days.
- Ask God to show you where you can be kind each day—in school, at home, with your friends, in your neighborhood, or at church. Write or draw your ideas on the calendar.
- Try to do one kind thing every day, even a small thing, and see how happy it makes you.
- Why not get your whole family involved? It's a great way to make friends and show people how much God loves them!

A GOOD THOUGHT

- Cut some paper into lots of thought-bubble shapes. Write each word of Philippians 4:8 on a different shape.
- Shuffle them up and see if you can put them in the right order to make the Bible verse.
- Now cut a very large thought bubble from the biggest piece of paper you can find to make a poster.
- Fill your thought-bubble poster with lots of things that are good to think about, such as encouraging Bible verses, positive messages, answered prayers, happy memories, your special hopes, and beautiful photos of nature.
- Whenever your mind is troubled by sad and unhelpful thoughts, stop and think about the things on your "good thought" poster. 1

Karen Holford has spent many years talking to families and helping them to be happy again.



Time for Church!

SABBATH MORNING SERVICES can seem really long when you're a child. Sometimes I help grownups understand what it's like for children in church. I make them sit on a table in front of a plain wall, because that's like sitting on a chair that's too big for you while not being able to see anything interesting. Next, I play them a sermon in a language that they don't understand. I do it for only a minute, but I ask them to imagine what it would be like to listen to that for an hour and not be able to understand anything. Then I ask them how they would feel if they had to do that every week for 10 years! They usually laugh about it, but it helps them to understand how children might feel during some church services.

It's much better to spend your time in church in a way that brings you closer to God. Ask your parents to buy you a good children's Bible that's easy for you to read and understand. Some have pictures to color or lots of ideas for things to do (for example, the *Hands-On Bible*). Ask your parents if you can have a Sabbath bag with a good notebook, pencil, markers, and other things that help you to enjoy church. Maybe your parents could pop a surprise into your bag once in a while! Here are some ways you can worship quietly in church during a hard-to-understand sermon.

MAKE A REBUS PUZZLE BIBLE VERSE

Choose your favorite verse from the Scripture reading and turn it into a rebus puzzle. This will also help you to memorize the words. A rebus puzzle is one where you swap some of the words, or parts of words, for little pictures of the objects, or pictures of things that sound similar. You might draw a heart for the word "love," write the number 4 instead of the word "for," draw a stick person for "man" or "woman," or write g8 for "gate." Here's a sample:



Show the rebus puzzle to someone and see if they can figure out the verse!



REMOVE THESE PAGES FOR CHILDREN



ART JOURNAL

Choose your favorite verse from the Scripture reading or sermon and turn it into a picture or postcard. Write the verse lightly in pencil so you can erase any mistakes. Then use your pens or crayons to bring it to life. Decorate the whole card in ways that illustrate the meaning of the verse, using your favorite style of artwork. On the back of the card write what the verse means to you or what you remember from the sermon. Write the date on the back of the card and keep your cards as a sermon journal.

PICTURE IT!

Sometimes the preacher will tell a story as a sermon illustration. Retell the story by drawing a simple cartoon. Show your cartoon to a friend and tell them the story too. What does this story tell you about God?

MODEL IT

If you have fidgety hands (and if it's OK with your parents) take something into church that you can use to create a scene from a Bible story or the sermon. You can use paper, scissors, glue, and coloring things; or colored modeling clay on a small tray or in a plastic box; or chenille wires/pipe cleaners. Afterward, show your scene to someone and tell all about it.



PRAY



Look around your church and pray for 10 people you see. You might not know what they need, but you can pray that they will know how much God loves them or that God will bless them today. Choose one person you are praying for and share God's love with them after the church service. Maybe you could make them a Bible verse card, or give them a hug if you're comfortable, or smile at them and wish them Happy Sabbath!



GET TO KNOW BIBLE CHARACTERS

If the sermon is difficult for you to understand, choose one of your favorite Bible characters and read about them in the Bible. If you are not sure where to find their story, ask your mom or dad to help you. Then draw a picture of a scene from their life, write a letter to the person, or design a trophy to celebrate one of their character strengths, such as bravery or faith or leadership. Write their story in your own words, create a poem about them, or even make up a song about their life. Find out some unusual facts about their life and make a quiz for your family. What do you like best about this character? What is the most important lesson you learned from their life story? In what ways are you like this character, and in what ways are you very different? How could you grow your character to be more like theirs?



GET INVOLVED

What would you like to see in your church service? What do you think would make it better for the children? Which part of the church service would you like to change the most? Which part would you like to take part in? What gifts has God given you that could be used in your church? Draw a big outline of a church on a piece of paper and write your dreams and hopes for your church inside the outline. Show it to your mom or dad and ask if you and the other children can help make your church the best place for children to experience God. Ask your parents to read my other article in this magazine (page 18) so they can find ways to involve children in your church service every week.





MAKE A WORD-SEARCH PUZZLE

Make a grid of squares on a sheet of paper using a ruler and pencil, or print out grid paper on your computer. When the preacher uses a key word in the sermon, fit it into the grid to make a word-search puzzle. Or use some of the words in the Bible reading for the day. You can write the words forward, backward, upward, downward, and diagonally, as long as all the letters in a word are in a straight line. Put one letter of the word in each square of the grid. It's even more fun if you can use a letter from one word in another word, so that the words crisscross through the grid. Whenever you include a word in your puzzle, write it down on a list, so that your parents, siblings, or friends can look for all your hidden words. You won't be able to fill all the squares in the grid with words, so fill the extra empty squares with any letter you like, or the letters of a Bible verse or name, until the square or rectangular grid has a letter in every small square. Keep an eraser handy for mistakes! ■

S	M	I	C	O	M	P	A	S	S	I	O	N	A	T	E	L
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Karen Holford loves having real fun with her three young grandchildren.





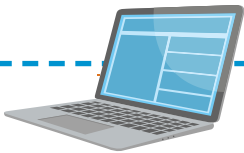
YOUR WEEKLY Birthday Gift!

GOD HAS MADE SABBATH to be like an every-week birthday gift! He wants it to be the most amazing day of our week. Choose a few of these activities to try during the next few months and see which ones you like the best.

CREATION EXPLORATION



- Find something in nature that is an illustration of God’s love or character.
- Go on a bug safari. Turn over a decaying log and see how many bugs live underneath.
- Watch a small creature for several minutes and learn what you can about its life. See what it does, what it eats, where it goes, and how it moves.
- Have a nature alphabet walk. Find something that begins with A (ant, acorn, apple) and then something that begins with B (bee, butterfly, branch, bone), and so on.
- Give each person the same page of a paint chart or a handful of paint-chart chips. If you don’t have those, cut a strip from a magazine photo that has a range of colors. See how many natural things you can find that match these colors exactly.
- Feel God’s world with your bare feet. Walk on different safe surfaces, such as grass, moss, leaves, mud, stones, and sand, and then wash each other’s feet.
- Go on a scavenger hunt. Make a list of natural objects you can easily find in your area and take a small bag to put them in. You can look for specific things, or try using broader categories such as something edible, something soft, something heart-shaped, something mentioned in the Bible, etc. Be sure to tear off only tiny parts of leaves or petals so you don’t stop the plant from growing and making seeds.



COMPUTER CHALLENGES

- Download the app at SabbathIdeas.org.
- Create a Bible quiz game using Kahoot: kahoot.it/.
- Watch inspiring videos on ignitermedia.com.
- Facetime or Zoom a lonely person or an old friend.
- Make short, inspirational video clips to upload.
- Go Geocaching: geocaching.com. Leave inspiring little gifts in the “treasure boxes.”
- Create a Bible puzzle or word search for your family to do.



CREATIVE CRAFTING

- Design, write, and decorate encouraging message cards with Bible verses. Make a stack of them to slip into newspapers, library books, or other places where people will find them.
- Use air-drying clay and make candle lanterns to remind your family that they are lights in the world. Or make items from a Bible story or something that illustrates God's love.
- Draw some beautiful pictures or take photographs to illustrate a Bible verse or a song for your church service.
- Make a Bible verse scrapbook. Let each person choose a Bible verse to print or write by hand, and then decorate the verse with craft materials. Each person can make their own Bible verse scrapbook, and you will learn Bible verses while you do this.
- Make thank-you cards or appreciation cards. Then send a few to people who have helped your family.
- Search the internet for animated Lego Bible stories and find out how to make your own with a video camera or phone.
- Write and decorate a beautiful Bible verse on the pavement or in a park using outdoor chalk. Inspire people passing by.
- Make small gifts to encourage others, such as simple dried lavender bags, Bible verses written with permanent markers on wood slices, etc.
- Find and photograph Christian symbols around your town, such as crosses (look for cross patterns in things that are not specifically crosses), hearts, etc.
- Make a sand, clay, or paper sculpture of a Bible story.

COMPASSIONATE KINDNESS

- Learn sign language from online videos and then sign some Bible verses.
- Find a way to take someone with a disability into a beautiful natural place using a wheelchair, an accessible taxi, etc.
- Sing at a nursing home or visit an elderly person and sing to them.
- Visit a blind person. Read to them and take small gifts they can experience with their other senses, such as food and flowers.
- Deliver home-baked cakes and cookies to a police station or nurses' station in a hospital. Bless those who need to care for others on Sabbath.
- Take a small seasonal gift to each of your neighbors' homes and ask if there is anything you can do to help or anything they would like you to pray about.
- Have a clean-up party at the local park, beach, or beauty spot. Get the right equipment to clean up safely.





MUSICAL MOMENTS

- Get together with friends or church members to sing and play whatever instruments you have.
- Come up with your own actions to your favorite songs.
- Make your own musical instruments from items you have in your home.
- Organize a flash mob in a public place and sing a Christian song; make it intergenerational.
- Create your own music videos or recordings and share them on Facebook or other social media.
- Learn a new children's Bible or praise song from the internet. Explore Paul Field's songs for children: paulfield.bandcamp.com/album/pass-it-on-fit-for-life.



BIBLE BONANZA

- Play Bible Search. Start reading a Bible verse or chapter and see who can be the first to find a designated word.
- Write each book of the Bible on a wooden clothespin. Make several sets and see who can be the fastest to put them in the correct order around a pizza pan or the sides of a cardboard box.
- Rewrite a psalm in modern language or a Bible story as if it were taking place today.
- Imagine you are a person in the Bible; then tell or write your life story.
- Use practical props, such as a bottle of water, a stick, and a feast of food, and lay them out in the order they appear in a Bible passage such as Psalm 23.
- Make Bible story objects out of modeling clay and see if people can guess what they are and which story they are from.
- Buy a colorful play parachute and learn how to use it to tell Bible stories, sing, pray, etc. Then take it into a park and let other people join you. For ideas, see www.throughtheroof.org/shop2/parachute-bible-stories/.
- Create your own Bible game together. ■

Karen Holford loves to help families create delightful Sabbaths that will inspire children to fall in love with God and enjoy His amazing gifts.

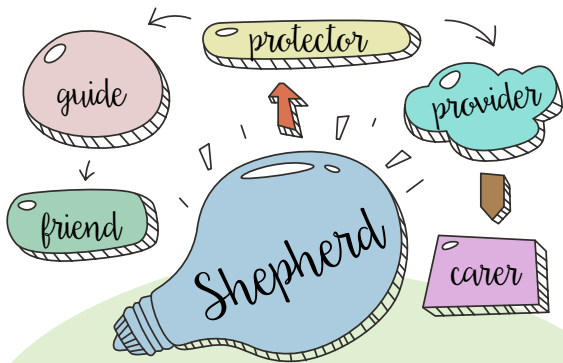


SCAN FOR AUDIO



UNI-VERSE EXPLORERS!

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN have adventures in God’s Word, even when you focus on just one verse? Grab your Bible, paper, notebook, index cards, and markers. Let’s explore together, one (uni) verse at a time!



MAPPING THE VERSE

Choose a Bible verse, such as one of the verses in Psalm 23. In a notebook or on an index card, create a diagram of what the verse means to you. For example, if you pick “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1), write the word *Shepherd* in the middle of the card or page. Around that central word, write what *Shepherd* means to you, such as *protector*, *carer*, *guide*, *provider*, *supporter*, *helper*, or *friend*. Next, around these words, write some of the ways God protects you, cares for you, guides you, and so on. This helps you to think more deeply about the verse and notice things you haven’t seen before.

WORD BY WORD ...

Choose a verse and write each significant word (or pair of words) on a different card or slip of paper. For example: Be – still – and know – that I – am God – Psalm 46:10. Arrange the words in the correct order to make the verse. Pick up one card at a time and write or draw any ideas that will help you understand the word better. Shuffle the cards and arrange them again in the correct order to help you memorize the verse.



JUST ONE WORD ...

Choose a Bible verse and write it on a small card. Think about the most important message in the verse and sum it up with only one word, like Hope, Peace, Forgiveness, Praise, or Wonder. Write your chosen word on the back of the verse card. Decorate the word in your favorite graphic style. Take this word with you throughout your day, and let it inspire and comfort you.



RE-WRITE

Read a verse carefully and slowly. You might like to read it in different Bible versions to help you understand it better. Then write the verse in your own words, applying it to your own life. Keep these verses in a notebook. Re-read them occasionally and see if you would change them again. Writing the verse in our own words can help us to think about the meaning more deeply.



PICTURE IT

Give each person a sheet of paper. Invite everyone to choose a favorite Bible verse that others might know and to illustrate it with a picture or a series of pictures, like a cartoon story. Show your pictures to each other and try to guess the verse that has been illustrated. Or make your own series of pictures into a little book. Write your ideas and thoughts about the verse on the back of the picture.

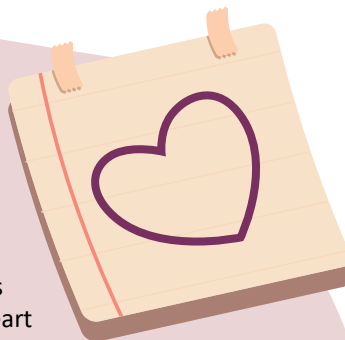


CRAFT A VERSE

Gather your craft materials or your construction toys. Choose a Bible verse that inspires you to make something. For example, you could make something to illustrate each of the verses in Psalm 23 using craft materials, toys, and things you can find in nature. You can work on this on your own and then show it to your family. Or each of you could illustrate one of the verses by making a scene or object. Why not photograph your creations, add the Bible verses, and share them with others?

LOVE STORY

The Bible is an amazing story of God's love! When we look closely, we can read the story of His love on every page. Choose a Bible verse. What does it tell you about God's love? Draw a heart on a piece of paper and write the Bible verse along the outside outline of the heart shape. Inside the heart, write what this verse helps you understand about God's wonderful love for you. Did you know that God's love for us is so amazing that we will spend eternity exploring it with Him and each other? And we can start that exploration right now!



CHAPTER AND VERSE

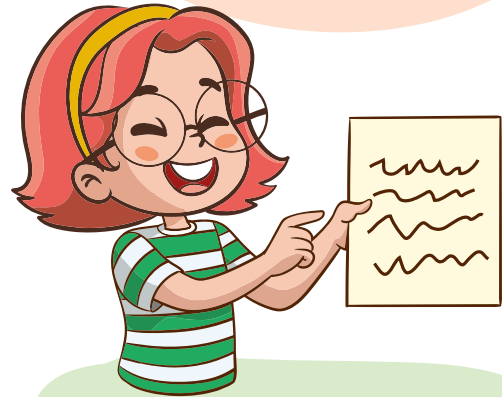


Whenever we read a verse in the Bible, it's good to read the whole chapter—and even some of the previous chapters. Reading around a verse helps us understand it better. Prayerfully read a whole chapter from one of the Gospels and then focus on one of the verses that inspires you. Choose one of the ideas in this feature to explore the inspiring verse.




PLAQUE

Choose a Bible verse that encourages you. Design a poster, picture, or plaque using that verse and decorate it in your favorite style. Place it where you will see it often. Or turn it into a keyring or something else you can carry wherever you go to remind you of God's loving care when you face challenges.



WISDOM FOR LIFE!

Solomon was one of the wisest men who ever lived. The book of Proverbs is filled with many wise and even funny verses! Choose one verse to discuss as a family. Wonder together what it meant in Solomon's day. Write out the verse from the Bible and then write at least one way in which the wisdom applies to your lives today. You can turn some of the verses into creative cartoons! Find your favorite way to explore the meaning of the many interesting verses. 

Karen Holford has a special verse that encourages her every day: "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). It reminds her that she can be at peace because God is always with her. He always does amazing things, even if she can't see them. What special verse will you choose to help you every day?

WORDS OF LOVE

As you read the Bible, collect all the verses that describe God's love for you. Write them on index cards or the pages of a special notebook. Write the verse in the middle and give the page or card a title with one word that describes the love in the verse, such as *comforting*, *forgiving*, *patient*, or *kind*. Underneath the verse or on the back of the card, write about a time when you experienced God's love or the love of another human being in that amazing way. You can find verses about God's love in many places. Start by checking out Psalm 23, 103, 139, 145; 1 Corinthians 13; Ephesians 3; and 1 John 4.



WHO AM I?

SCAN FOR AUDIO



- Before you do the worship activities on these pages with your family, cut out shapes or find objects to make a cardboard wreath. Cut out two identical 12-inch (30-centimeter) circles from corrugated or stiff cardboard. Cut out a smaller circle from the center of the circle to make a wreath shape with a border about 2 inches (5 centimeters) wide. Stick the two 12-inch circles of card together to make a strong wreath shape.
- Write or cut out the letters of your name and stick your name on the wreath.
- Cut out the different shapes or find the objects suggested in each activity. Stick them around the wreath to remind you how much God loves you! Add other shapes and bits and pieces to customize the wreath with your favorite colors.

Read Psalm 139:13-18.

- Use whatever craft materials you have, or use some of the natural materials around you, to make a model of a person. God used clay to make the shape of Adam.
- What is it like to try to make something that looks like a human being? Fun? Difficult? Frustrating? Exciting? What challenges did you face as you tried to make a person? Whenever I try to make a person out of clay, I am very glad that God designed us so beautifully and we don't look like my funny, lopsided models!
- Praise God together for creating us with such expert detail in every way. When you take time to make something special, you really treasure your creations, and God treasures you because you are handmade with love by Him.
- Stick a small photo or drawing of yourself onto your wreath.



I AM BELOVED BY GOD

Read Ephesians 3:14-19.

- God's love is wider and longer and higher and deeper than you can ever imagine! It is as big as the universe, and that is bigger than we can ever begin to measure.
- Go outside to a dark place and look at the night sky together as a family. Try to count the stars. It's impossible! Imagine that everything you can see, in every direction, and everything you can't see is completely filled with God's love for you. How does that make you feel? You are so beloved by God, and He will always love you this big!
- Imagine that the God who loves you this much sends you a postcard with a message of love on it. Find a blank postcard or cut a piece of white card to the same size. On one side draw a picture that reminds you how beloved you are by God, and on the other side write a message of love that God might write to you today.
- Make a small heart shape out of things you can find around your home. Decorate it to illustrate God's love in some way. Stick this onto your wreath.



I AM FORGIVEN BY GOD

Read Psalm 103.

- Talk in your family about what you might need to ask forgiveness for and maybe grant forgiveness for. Forgiveness helps everyone feel free and clean!
- Cut a heart out of white paper to show that God washes our hearts with His forgiveness and makes them white as snow. Stick this onto your wreath.

I AM SEARCHED FOR BY GOD



Read Luke 15:3-7 (the story of the lost sheep).

- Take turns hiding in your home or yard. Hide as carefully as you can and pretend you are a lost sheep and are too tired to bleat! Everyone should look for the person who is the lost sheep. Whenever a lost sheep is found, have a mini celebration! Perhaps enjoy a nice drink or a tiny treat or sing a happy song to celebrate finding the lost sheep.
- Remember that you are so special to God that He is willing to do whatever it takes to find you, even when you feel lost, and He always brings you back to safety. Finding you makes Him so happy He wants to celebrate in the best way possible!
- Cut out a cardboard sheep. Stick fluffy cotton wool onto it and draw its ears, eyes, and hooves. Stick this onto your wreath.



REMOVE THESE PAGES FOR CHILDREN



Who am I?



I AM GIFTED BY GOD

Read Romans 12:3-8.

- God has given special gifts to every single person who chooses to follow Jesus. He gives these gifts to us to help us show other people how much He loves them. Many of the gifts are things children can do to bless others and show them God's love. Like encouraging people, serving, helping, being kind, and being generous with others.
- Even if you don't have any money, you can be generous in your kindness, your gift of time, and your welcome of others.
- Cover a small box with plain paper and tie some yarn or ribbon around it. Write the name of each person in your family on a different side of the box. If you have more than six people in your family, use a larger box and divide some of the sides into two.
- Pass the box around and write each person's gifts around their name. Tell them when you've seen them use their special gifts from God. Together hold the box as you all thank God for the gifts He has given each of you to bless your family.
- Cut out a cardboard shape of a small gift. Cover it with colored paper and tie some yarn or ribbon around it to make a bow. Write one of your gifts from God on the wrapping paper and stick it onto your wreath.



I AM A PRINCE OR PRINCESS IN HIS KINGDOM

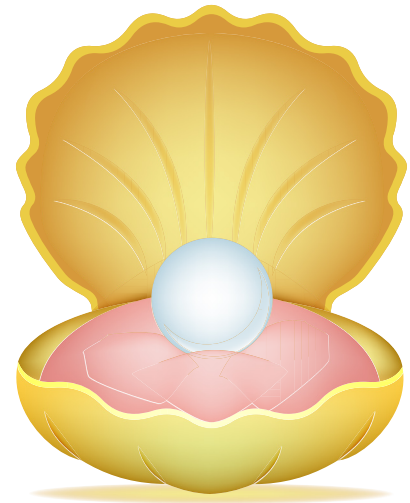
Read Romans 8:17.

- We are heirs of God, alongside Jesus! That makes us princes and princesses in the kingdom of God! You are princesses and princes right here and right now!
- What do you know about princes and princesses? What do they do? How do they live? How do they care for others? The best princes and princesses are very kind and polite to other people, and they do what they can to support people who are struggling by working with charities and aid organizations.
- Go and dress up as if you are princes and princesses—even Mom and Dad can join in if they wish! Then eat a meal together and treat each other as if you are all in a royal family, because we are all in the royal family of God. How does being a prince or princess change how you see yourself and how you treat each other?
- Cut out a crown from gold cardstock or use white paper and color it yellow to make a beautiful crown. Write your name along the bottom edge of the crown and stick it onto your wreath.

I AM PRECIOUS TO GOD

Read Matthew 13:45, 46.

- You might think you are only tiny, but to God you are super-precious! The most famous and greatest people on earth are no more precious to God than a newborn baby or a child like you.
- We often read the story of the man who sold everything to buy a pearl as if we need to be that man and give up everything we have. But we can also read the story as if God is the man and we are very precious like the pearl. He comes looking for us, digging for us, and when He finds us, He is willing to give up everything to save us!
- Find something in your house that is small and a bit like a pearl, such as a bead, a pearly button, a marble, or even a dry white bean.
- Find an old tray or large shallow box. Have an adult fill it with sand, compost, or dry soil, and then hide the “pearl” in the box so it can’t be seen.
- Take turns removing one spoonful of dirt out of the box and see if you can find the “pearl.” When you do, you must run and find some of your best toys or possessions and “sell” them to Mom or Dad to swap for the pearl. Your parent will tell you when you have enough things to swap for the value of the pearl. Don’t worry! They will give them right back to you after worship.
- You are so precious that Jesus swapped all of heaven to come to earth to find you and buy you with His sacrifice because He loves you so much!
- Cut a circle out of white cardstock or pearlized cardstock to make a large pearl to stick on your wreath. On the pearl write “I am precious to God!”



FINISHING YOUR WREATH

Once you have stuck all your shapes onto your wreath, you may have some gaps around the circle. You can color in the gaps or fill them in with colored paper. ■

Karen Holford is excited by who she is in God's loving eyes! And she loves to help others see who they are in God's eyes too!



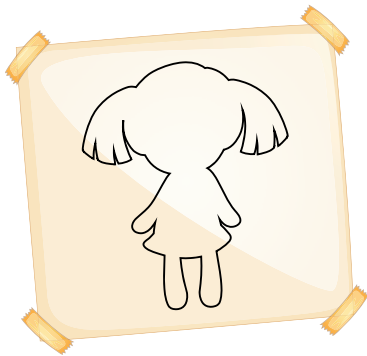


WONDERFULLY MADE

When God made human beings, He said they were “very good.” And that includes you!



SCAN FOR AUDIO



I'M AMAZING!

Read Psalm 139:13–18. You are fearfully and wonderfully made! Draw a picture of yourself. Roll out a long piece of craft paper, or glue or tape several sheets of printer or construction paper together. (Or you can use sidewalk chalk on your driveway or church parking lot.) Ask a parent to draw around your body. Write something amazing about each area of your body: your toes, legs, knees, tummy, chest, arms, and more.



SHAPED FROM CLAY

God shaped Adam out of clay (Genesis 2:7). Use clay or make playdough with flour, salt, and water. Give each person in your family a piece of clay or playdough and ask them to shape a person. It's a bit tricky! Don't worry if your person looks a bit wobbly. Show your models to each other. Imagine that all humans looked like your models! Laugh! Then thank God for making you—because He is a much better artist than any human will ever be!



HANDY HANDS

Draw around an adult's hand. Then fill the hand shape with things you love to do with your hands. Isn't that amazing? Thank God for making your amazing hands! How do you use your hands to bless the people around you by sharing God's love? Read Ecclesiastes 9:10.

Find the answer to these questions:

- How many bones are in each of your hands?
- What is special about human thumbs? (Try doing some simple tasks without using your thumbs. What happens?)
- Find out how you can use your hands to communicate if you can't speak. Learn to finger-spell your name.



TOUCHY-FEELY

Ask a parent to place several clean objects with different textures into a pillowcase. Without looking, put your hand inside and see if you can name all the objects just by feeling them. Your hands are amazing because they can feel the difference between so many things!



NIFTY NOSE

Ask a parent to find several things you would recognize by smell and put each in a different paper sack so you can't see what they are. Smell each sack and try to guess what's inside. Lemon? Soap? Garlic? Lavender?

Coconut? Thank God together for all the lovely things He made that you can smell with your nose. Paul told the Corinthians that they were to be a lovely fragrance of God's love in the world (2 Corinthians 2:15). If God's love had a fragrance, what do you think it would smell like? How can your family be the fragrance of God's love in the world and make your community a kinder and happier place to live?



INCREDIBLE FEET

Draw around one of your feet. Write in the shape some of the things you like to do with your feet. Then jump, skip, hop, and run! Have everyone in your family stand on one foot and see who can stand the longest without putting the other foot on the floor. Standing on one foot is very good for your body's balance. Some doctors encourage people to balance on one foot every time they brush their teeth. This habit can develop their balance muscles!

Read Romans 10:15. How do your feet carry the good news of God's love into the world?



LISTENING EARS

Be very still and quiet for a few moments, and then tell each other the different sounds you can hear inside and outside your home. Your ears are amazing! God made them so you could listen to those you love, sing together, learn from your teachers, stay safe on the roads, hear the wonderful birdsong, and listen to so many other things! Thank God for your ears because they help you learn about Him. Ask your parents how they listen for God's voice.



WONDERFULLY MADE

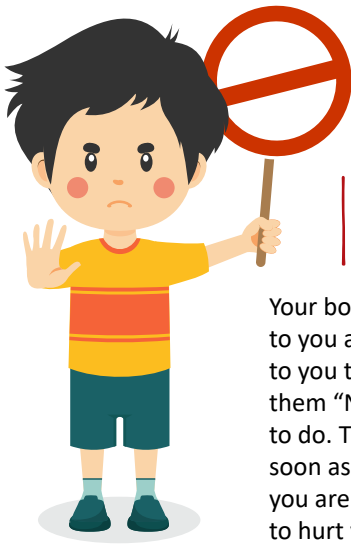
Make a little sign to put on every mirror in your house that says, "You are wonderfully made! You have been designed by the greatest Artist and Scientist in the universe, and He loves you!" Remember that whatever anyone says to you or about you, God loves you and thinks that you are beautiful and amazing.





THANK YOU, GOD, FOR MAKING ME, ME

Design a card to thank God for making you just the way you are! You could paste a photo of yourself on the front or draw a picture instead. Then write a thank you note to God inside the card. Even though you can't mail it to God, He sees what you write!




IT'S OK TO SAY NO!

Your body is very precious and special. It belongs to you and God. If someone wants to do something to you that you don't want them to do, you can tell them "No!" and yell "STOP!" This is a good thing to do. Then tell your parents or a trusted adult as soon as you can. This is very important because you are so special, and God does not want anyone to hurt you. Read Matthew 18:2-6.



BODY PRAISE

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6). We can praise God with our whole bodies! Sing one of your family's favorite praise songs. Take turns choosing a body part, such as your toes, arms, hands, legs, knees, or elbows. Then invite everyone to praise God with that part of their body. Wow! You will all bring a lovely smile to God's beautiful and loving face. 

JESUS BLESSED CHILDREN

All children are very precious to Jesus. He took them in His arms and blessed them (Mark 10:13-16). Every bit of you is very precious to God because He made every part of you, and everything is beautiful and wonderfully made. Worship is using all that you are to praise God for all His amazing love! Ask your parents to take you in their arms, bless you, and praise God for the way He has made you and gifted you to them.



Karen Holford is the family, children's, and women's ministries director of the Trans-European Division. She lives in England and loves praising God with children because they are so full of joy and creativity!

YOU ARE BLESSED!

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

ONE DAY JESUS SAT down on a mountain with His friends. He looked around the crowd and saw many tired and worried faces. So He blessed them and told them many wonderful and surprising things! We call these sayings of Jesus the Beatitudes, and you can find them in Matthew 5. His beautiful words bless us today too!



SCAN FOR AUDIO



BLESSED ARE
THOSE WHO
FEEL SAD

Jesus blessed the sad people because He longs to wipe away all our tears forever. When our friends know we are sad, they comfort us and help us feel better.

- Tell each other when you felt sad this week. Then describe how you most like to be comforted. Take a very large sheet of paper and divide it into twelve rectangles like a patchwork quilt: four rows of three squares. Draw or write something in each square that helps to comfort you or someone else in your family.
- Ask your parents to wrap you in a blanket and give you a big hug! Imagine God is giving you a big comforting hug too! What would God whisper in your ear to comfort you today?

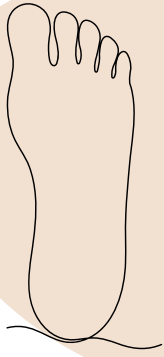


BLESSED
ARE THE
POOR IN
SPIRIT

Jesus blessed the people who didn't feel spiritually good enough. He told them not to be discouraged. When we know we are spiritually weak, we make space for God to work in our hearts!

- Hold an empty cup in your hands as you pray. Tell God you feel empty and want Him to fill you with His love and peace. Pour some delicious juice or fresh water into the cup and drink it slowly. Just as the water we drink reaches every part of our body and makes it feel alive and healthy, so God wants to fill all our empty parts with His love so that we can have a healthy relationship with Him!
- Draw a big heart on a piece of paper. It's empty. Fill the heart with pictures and words that will remind you of God's love, even when you feel poor in spirit.





BLESSED ARE
THOSE WHO
DON'T NEED
TO BE FIRST

Jesus said that meek and humble people will inherit the earth! In God's kingdom, the people who serve others are the greatest. When we feel safe and loved by God, we don't need to win all the time or boss others around.

- What did Jesus do to serve others? Read John 13:1–17. Washing feet was a job for the lowest servants, but Jesus was happy to care for His friends. Act out the story with your family, or take turns washing each other's feet kindly and gently.
- Draw around your feet on a sheet of paper. Inside each foot, write different ways you could serve others.



BLESSED ARE THOSE
WHO WANT TO PUT
THINGS RIGHT

Jesus knew that many things in the world needed to be made right. Whenever people are being hurt, put down, robbed, teased, bullied, or misused, or don't have enough food, clothes, or a safe home, we need to help put things right for them.

- Find a local newspaper and look for stories of people who are making your town a better place. Who feeds hungry people? Who protects people who don't have a home? Who cares for refugees? Who looks after abandoned animals or picks up trash? Choose someone who is putting things right in your community and make a card to thank them.
- What are the sad things in your community that your family wants to put right and make better? What could you do to make a tiny difference? Look for ways to tidy up the streets, donate food and clothes, and make things better for people who are poor and have difficult lives.

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART

Jesus explained that people who have pure hearts will learn to see God clearly. We have pure hearts when we are honest and want the best for others.

What's in Your Heart?

- Go on a scavenger hunt to find objects that depict your values, your priorities, and the things you love.
- Arrange your objects on a tray. What do they say about your heart? Does anything stop you from seeing a clear picture of God's love? Is there anything you want to change or add?
- Ask each person in your family to do this so you can see inside their hearts, too.
- Make a collection of objects that represent what God loves and display His values. How is it different from each of your collections?

How Do You See God?

- We all see God differently. Draw a picture of how you imagine God to look. Around your picture, write some words that describe Him.
 - Compare them with the pictures of God drawn by your family. What can you learn from each other's pictures of God?





BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE KIND

Jesus came to show us how much God loves us! We are like little lights shining on God's love each time we are kind to others!

Light Up Jesus' Love!

- Find a jar, a piece of white paper, scissors, tape, a red pen or crayon, a black pen or crayon, and a battery-operated candle (or a real candle if an adult supervises).
- Cut a paper strip to fit around the glass jar with a little overlap. In the middle of the strip, color a red heart about 2 inches wide and high. Use a pen or crayon that does not leak through the paper.
- Write the name of Jesus with the black pen or crayon, back-to-front, inside the edges of the heart shape. Ask an adult to help you if this is difficult.
- Tape the paper around the jar with the heart on the inside so that the paper around the jar looks white. Place a light or candle inside the jar and watch the heart and the name of Jesus appear when the light shines through the paper. If it doesn't look right, try again!

Kindness Names

- Write the letters of your name down the side of a sheet of paper.
- Think of one kind thing you could do for others, beginning with each letter of your name.
- Each time you do something kind, draw a heart next to the idea.
- How quickly can you complete all your kindness challenges?

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS



Jesus told us that when we help people to be friends instead of enemies, we show the world that we are God's children.

Making Peace

- Read the story of Abigail, Nabal, and David in 1 Samuel 25.
- Search for all the lovely things Abigail did to make peace with David after her husband, Nabal, had been rude to him.
- Think of ten things you could do to make friends with someone.

Peace Project

- Ask family members and friends what they do to make peace again after an argument.
- Can you list ten things you could do to help make peace? Here are some ideas to get you started: listen, show you understand, care, and apologize.

BEAUTIFUL BEATITUDES!



Explore the Beatitudes with these beautiful ideas.

- Create a different action with your body to illustrate each verse.
- Draw pictures or posters to illustrate each Beatitude.
- Take photos to illustrate each Beatitude.
- Write a poem or song about the Beatitudes. Or write a short story that illustrates each Beatitude. ❤️

Karen Holford writes from England. She loves reading the Beatitudes and making them a part of her life.



YOU'RE NEVER ALL ALONE!

GOD WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU

Do you ever feel lonely? If you do, when do you feel most lonely?
And when are you happy to be alone?



GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US!

God will never leave you because He loves you so much! Read the following verses about God being with you all the time. Make a list of all the ways God's love helps you to feel better when you feel lonely.

- Deuteronomy 31:8
- Joshua 1:9
- Psalm 23:4
- Isaiah 41:10
- Isaiah 41:13
- Isaiah 43:2
- Matthew 28:20
- Philippians 4:6, 7



READY REMINDER

Choose something to remind you that God is always with you. You could:

- Make a heart shape with your hands.
- Put your hand on your chest.
- Create a small heart-shaped object to tie on your school bag or pin inside a pocket.



SHARE GOD'S LOVE

Choose your favorite Bible verse about God's loving closeness. Write it on a card, decorate it, and send it to someone lonely.

SCAN FOR AUDIO



EVERYONE FEELS LONELY SOMETIMES

Did you know it's normal to feel lonely sometimes? Jesus felt lonely too. Can you find stories in the Bible about Jesus feeling lonely?



LONELY DAVID

Even David was lonely at times. Read Psalm 25 (especially verse 16) and Psalm 142 in a modern version of the Bible. What do you think David was feeling when he was alone? What feelings do you have when you are alone? Sad, quiet, contented, discouraged, afraid?

Write your own psalm about a lonely experience and end by praising God for being with you all the time.

BE STILL WITH GOD

It is good to be quiet and alone for a while. Think about how much God loves you. His love for you is bigger than anything you can imagine! He enjoyed creating you! He likes you very much, and He is very, very pleased with you. Yes, you!

Wrap your arms around yourself in a big hug from God! He is always with you. You are never really alone.

Ask God what you can do to help others. Maybe there is someone else who is lonely whom God would like you to befriend.



UNUSUAL FRIENDS

The Bible tells stories of people who could have been lonely, but God sent them a very special friend—someone surprising. Read their stories and find out how they helped each other. Maybe God will give you an unexpected friend to bless your life too!

- Naaman's maid and her rich employer (2 Kings 5:1–19)
- Elijah and a poor foreign widow from Zarephath (1 Kings 17:7–24)
- Naomi and her Moabite daughter-in-law, Ruth (Ruth 1–4)
- David and Jonathan, even when Jonathan's father, Saul, wanted to hurt David (1 Samuel 19:1–7)
- David and Mephibosheth, a king and a man with a disability (2 Samuel 9:1–13)
- The woman at the well and Jesus, the Messiah (John 4:1–26)
- Hadassah, an orphan girl, and her cousin, Mordecai, who worked for the king (Esther 2:5–7)
- Paul and Onesimus, a runaway slave (Philemon)

During family worship, act out the stories of lonely people in the Bible and see if you can guess each other's stories.



Being alone doesn't have to be sad and boring. List some activities that are fun to do on your own, then collect some things to help you. Here are some ideas:

- Write a letter or card to send to a lonely family member.
- Search for one small object beginning with each letter of the alphabet or each letter in your name.
- Set a timer for 30 minutes and see how fast you can tidy your room. See if you can beat the clock!
- Stack paper cups, stones, or twigs and see how high you can build a tower.


- Cut pictures from old magazines and make a collage of your favorite things.
- Read a book and write a summary of the story in fewer than 100 words.
- Make a treat for your family, such as fruit salad.
- Make healthy candies. Mix equal amounts of smooth nut butter and clear honey, then add milk powder, coconut flour, or ground almonds and knead everything together until the mixture is stiff. Shape into balls and roll in chopped nuts, grated chocolate, cocoa powder, or cinnamon.
- Create something to help your family celebrate Sabbath this week. Craft a candle holder, pick flowers, plan a special worship time, organize a treasure hunt, or help your parents prepare Sabbath dessert.
- Do something to make a lonely person happy—give them a picture you drew, a story you wrote, or cookies you baked.
- Make a scrapbook of your favorite Bible verses and decorate each verse in a beautiful way.
- Plan a fun way to tell your Sabbath School lesson story to your family.
- Use an old box to make a Bible-time house. Find out what would be in the house and make models of the furniture and other things from scraps and old boxes. Or build a Bible home with wooden bricks or construction sets. Use it to tell a Bible story that takes place in a house.

A VERY SPECIAL CHURCH

Peter and Polly arrived at their new church. It was a small church without any other children. Almost everyone was old enough to be their grandparent. Polly sighed. She was hoping for a new friend. But everyone was so happy to have children in their church! They wanted to do everything they could to make church special for Peter and Polly. Peter liked to read the Bible during the church service. Polly liked to help Mommy arrange the flowers and set out drinks and snacks after the service.

Sometimes Peter and Polly made little things to give to everyone at church. They made cookies, baked bread rolls, decorated cards and bookmarks, and tied small bunches of flowers. Sometimes the older people brought little surprises for Peter and Polly: home-baked cakes, candies, books, and knitted sweaters and scarves when winter came.

Peter and Polly's parents took the children to visit each of the older people. They recorded amazing stories from their lives and turned them into a little book. Peter learned how to make videos of their stories to show in church. Sometimes everyone in the church would join their Sabbath School class, sing their songs, listen to their stories, and help make crafts.

Polly and Peter learned how fun it was to have older friends too! 

***Karen Holford** travels alone in her role as Family and Children's Ministries director in the Trans-European Division. She enjoys the quiet time to write, read books, and embroider pictures of nature. Whenever being alone is a little scary, she gives herself a big hug from God and she soon feels better again!*