



The Spirit of St. Paul's

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

www.stpaulslutheran.ca

MARCH 2023

Pastor

SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENS EVERY SUNDAY

You might have heard about what has become known as the “Asbury revival” that took place at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky. On February 8, students gathered for their regularly scheduled chapel service during which the leader prayed, “Lord, revive us with your love.” The service then continued with singing and praise. To this point there wasn't anything unusual about this chapel service, it was like the many that had come before. But this one became very unique when it just kept going. It kept going until February 24. Around the clock those in attendance continued in song, study, prayer, and sharing testimonies about their faith. As the news spread through social media and even mainstream media, about what was going on, crowds of people started to join. It is estimated that roughly 15,000 people were attending each day. It's a remarkable thing that happened!

But what exactly did happen? Was this a miraculous experience of God's presence and grace in an unprecedented way? Maybe. It's possible that God appeared

in some great way in the chapel of this university campus. He is free and able to show himself wherever and however He pleases. We can't know for sure what happened. But we can be certain that whatever happened in Kentucky is no more miraculous, powerful, or meaningful than what happens each week at St. Paul's and every other place where God's Word is proclaimed and His Holy Sacraments are given. Yes, it's possible that God appeared in an extraordinary way for this extended chapel service. But He has promised to be in our presence with His gifts of salvation each and every time we gather as His people to receive them.

It isn't my intention to challenge or undermine what happened at Asbury or other “revivals” that involve something seemingly spectacular. What is important is that we continue to be grateful and thankful for God's presence in our lives and that we are confident in the salvation that He continues to graciously give—even when it seems ordinary and only two or three of us are gathered in His

name (Matthew 18:20). Sure, it can look far less spectacular when we arrive at church. There likely won't be hours-long lines to get in. There likely won't be media reporting on what's going on. There may not be as much emotion and enthusiasm. But God is there with His gifts saving us. Through the waters of Holy Baptism God is present forgiving, claiming, giving life to those who receive it, “...you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11). Through Holy Absolution God is forgiving your sin, “...as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12). God is there in His Word as it is read and preached, convicting us of our sin through His Law and bringing us life through the Gospel. He promises about His Word, “...it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

*God's blessings,
Pastor Keith*

Reminders

- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.

- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.

- LWMLC mites and society offerings may be put in the offering plate, mailed to the church or given to society treasurer, Marion Hollinger. Please make any cheques payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church but mark them clearly as being for LWMLC. Indicate the amount for mites and the amount for society funds.

Classifieds

Something to sell or give away? Need something? Services to offer to fellow members? Try The Spirit Classifieds first. No cost. Leave your ads at the church office or give them to the editor.

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Stewardship

Lenten Discipline: Denying the Self

We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts—the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God which pertain to this body and life. In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh, but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

Fasting is a good example of this outward training. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. But you have learned something about how your flesh works, how difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above to discipline the desires of your body.

Another example is almsgiving. An increase in giving to the church and its mission during Lent is also a form of outward training. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are practicing saying “no” to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you've learned just how powerful your flesh is — it leads you instead of you leading it. You've learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Timothy 6:6–10)

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.

*Blessings and peace,
 Board of Stewardship*



As members of the body of Christ at St. Paul's we each have gifts to share for the benefit of all. Can you picture yourself meeting on of the many opportunities to serve your Saviour and brothers and sisters in Christ as identified by the Board of Education.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

- teach or aid in the classroom Sunday mornings after church
- provide craft ideas and/or help implement them
- read books aloud
- helping with Easter and Christmas special events—concerts, hand bells, singing, fun events such as an Easter egg hunt, providing snacks during practices or fun events
- mail birthday cards and/or baptismal anniversary cards to students on their birthday or anniversary

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP ACTIVITY BAGS

- keep items current for the church year and seasons of the year
- replace worn items
- keep contents and bags clean

CRADLE ROLL

- prepare welcome card and book for newly baptized infants

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (summer)

- be an organizer

YOUTH AND/OR YOUNG ADULTS

- plan and/or implement once per month activities
- run a Bible study

PROJECT CONNECT

- check Project Connect stand for empty spots
- periodically order new pamphlets and booklets from Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada

LIBRARY

- keep library tidy
- feature new, different, seasonally appropriate books in a special display area.
- submit small book reports or new book notifications for the church newsletter.

GRIEF SHARE PROGRAM (13 sessions)

- be a facilitator

Thank you for your consideration!

*Board of Christian Education
and Youth*

*Lisa Poier (Chair),
Gail Mitchell, Denise Timm*

Welcome to our family



Eleanor Lloyd Paul, daughter of Craig & Megan Paul was baptized into our St. Paul's family on February 19, 2023.



Evangelism

The Good News of the Cross

In Matthew 16:13-14 (ESV), Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” In verses 15-19, Jesus pointed out that it was His Heavenly Father who had revealed this truth to Peter, and that it was on this truth that He (Christ) would build His church.

“From that time, Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘Far be it from You, Lord! This shall never happen to You.’ But [Jesus] turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me. For you are not setting your mind on the things

of God, but on the things of man” (Matthew 16:21-23 ESV).

Knowing that He was the promised Messiah/Christ, Peter could not envision it would be through humility and suffering that Jesus would fulfill His Father’s will to save humanity from sin, death and Satan’s power, and to restore our peace with Him.

“Then Jesus told His disciples, ‘If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with His angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will repay each person according to what he has done.’” (Matthew 16:24-28a ESV)

John was the only disciple who did not die a martyr’s death, and

even he experienced persecution and exile because of his faith. In the centuries that have followed, many Christians around the world have been imprisoned, tortured, and killed because of their faith. Taking up our cross involves standing firm in our faith and being willing to stand apart from the crowd, despite whatever negative consequences come our way. We look to Jesus’ second coming when He will pass judgment on the evil ones and bring into fullness His reward of the faithful.

Easter Cross Witness

Our board members encourage you to honour Christ by once again participating in the Easter Cross Witness. Instructions suggest that the plain side of your cross be displayed beginning on Palm Sunday (April 2) and throughout the following week, and that your cross be turned to display “He is Risen” on Easter Sunday (April 9) and

continued next page

Understanding Our Neighbour’s Faith: An Introduction to World Religions from a Christian Perspective

From January 24 to February 14, Concordia Lutheran Seminary (Edmonton) offered its 2023 Winter Quest series, “Understanding your Neighbour’s Faith: An Introduction to World Religions from a Christian Perspective” presented by Dr. Sam Thompson. This year, the series was only offered online.

Although the opportunity to view each video at its premiere and to be involved in the “live chat” has passed, opportunity continues

to view the recorded videos and to submit any questions or comments to either Dr. Thompson (sthompson@concordiasem.ab.ca) or Dr. Gimbel (jgimbel@concordiasem.ab.ca).

The following videos are available for viewing at Concordia’s YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ConcordiaLutheranSem>
Introduction (by Dr. James Gimbel)
Week 1 part 1: What is Religion?

Week 1 part 2: Hinduism
Week 2 part 1: Sikhism
Week 2 part 2: Buddhism
Week 3 part 1: Islam
Week 3 part 2: Scientology
Week 4 part 1: Neo-Paganism
Week 4 part 2: Christian Theological Approaches to World Religion

As Canada is home to people from a diversity of cultures and world religions, the mission field is all around us!

Submitted by Verla Schmirler

Evangelism, continued
throughout the week that follows.

We have nine crosses remaining for new participants or as replacements. They will be available in the church entry following Divine Service on the Sundays of March 19 and 26, as well as April 2 (while quantities last).

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18 ESV)

Connecting With Our
Neighbourhood

We are pleased to share the good news that Sherry Gore

has volunteered to represent our congregation regarding our neighbourhood community association, QEXCA. We thank Sherry for her willingness to serve our Lord in this way!

*Verla Schmirler,
for Board of Evangelism
and Public Relations*

Education

KIDS CORNER GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

One Lord, One faith, One baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

Hi kids!

Spring is getting closer... even the onions and garlic in my kitchen know it. They're starting to sprout! In the middle of winter, new life is starting to show. The season of Lent for us Christians is like the cold and dark winter. Thinking of what Jesus did for us on the cross in the six weeks before Good Friday and Easter, is what Lent is about. Spending time praying, going without some things we love for awhile and giving away some of our things, are ways that help us concentrate on Jesus and His act of love of dying on the cross for all the people of the world. Everyone

became unable to stop sinning when sin first entered the world through Adam and Eve being disobedient to God. God's plan was to send Jesus, His Son, so we could be forgiven and be made sinless again. New life became ours on that first Easter Sunday! We look forward to Easter when God completed His plan, but in the meantime, and even all year, it is good to spend time focusing on Jesus. He loves when we do this, because, just like those people who love you and want to be close to you, Jesus does too! At the end of this newsletter you will find some activity

sheets and separate from this newsletter, you can find a devotional called "Sorrow and Joy" to guide and help you and your family think about Jesus. Sunday school is another way! We meet in the church basement after church service for about half an hour. You (and your parents too if they want) are very welcome! Now every time you see the onions, garlic, or other plants in your house, or outside, sprouting or getting new leaves, you can think of your new life with Jesus...forgiven and free!

Denise Timm and Lisa Poier
St. Paul's Sunday School



ASH WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES



TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND AN ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE AS A FAMILY. CELEBRATING LENT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO FORM THE FAITH OF YOUR CHILDREN BY TEACHING THEM ABOUT HOW JESUS LOVES THEM BY BRINGING THE GOOD NEWS OF SALVATION TO LIFE.



PRAY



FAST



GIVE

Prayer, Fasting and **Giving** are three actions that can help prepare our hearts and minds for Easter. Try these ideas below with your children.

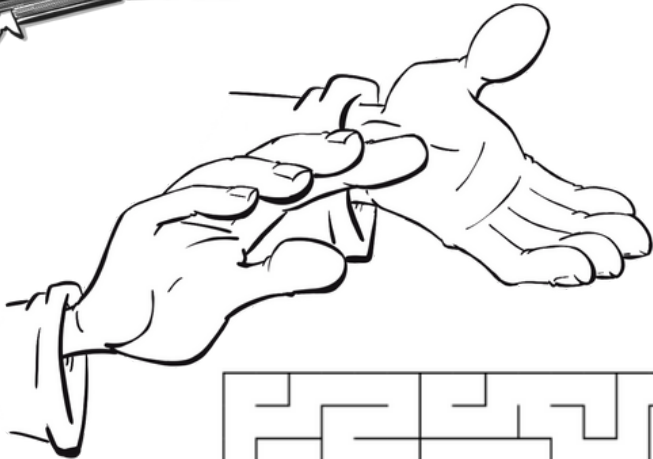
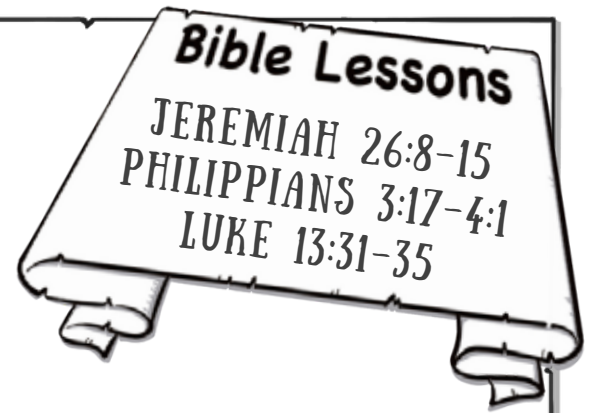
Pray: Set a timer and spend some time in silent prayer each day. Work your way up to 2 minutes. This is harder than you think!

Fast: Give up something or a habit that may get in the way of your relationship with God. Examples: TV, Social media, candy.

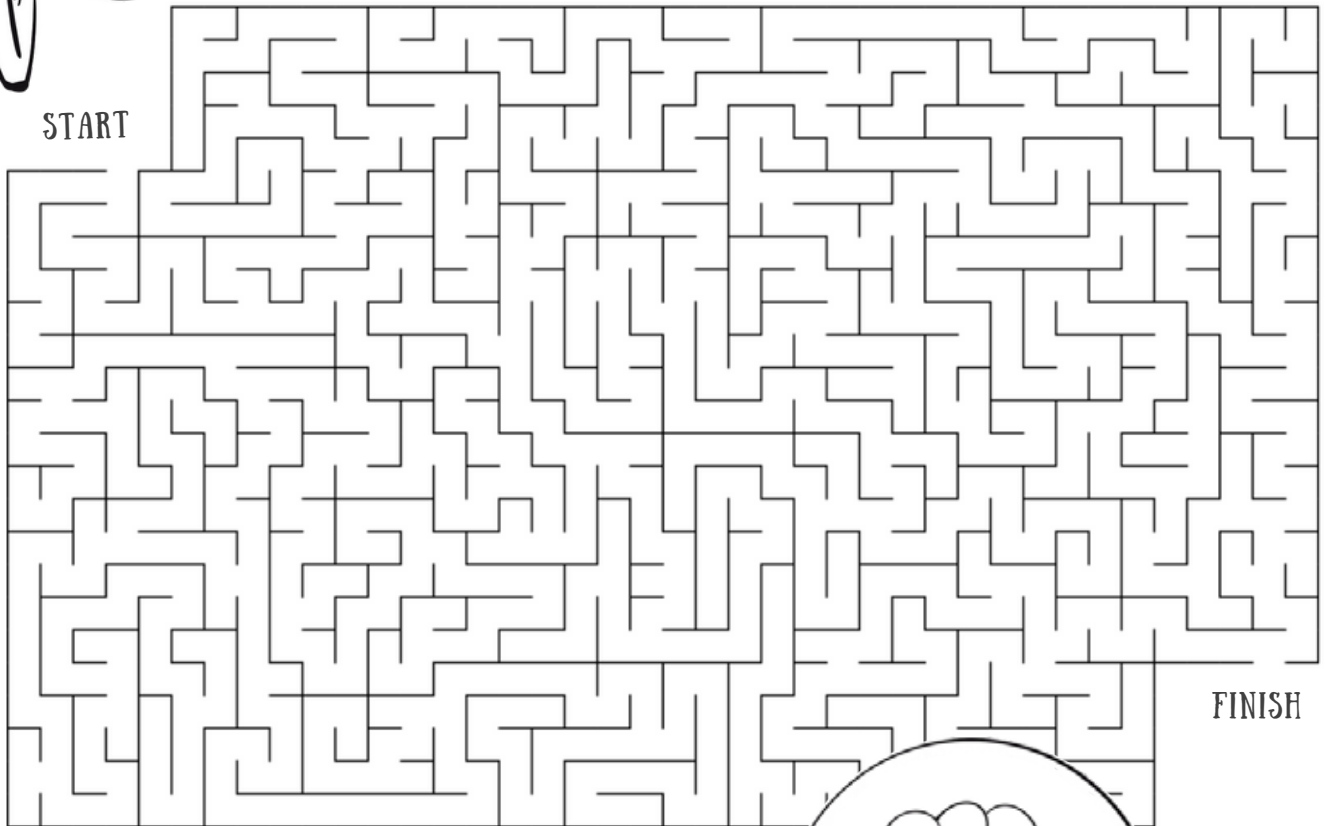
Give: Almsgiving is the act of donating money or goods to the poor or performing other acts of charity. Children can practice this by filling a box with toys or clothes to donate.



Kids Lectionary Learning
2ND SUNDAY IN LENT



Read Luke 13:31-35 and then try today's maze.



"How often would I have gathered
your children together as a
hen gathers her brood under her wings,
and you were not willing!"

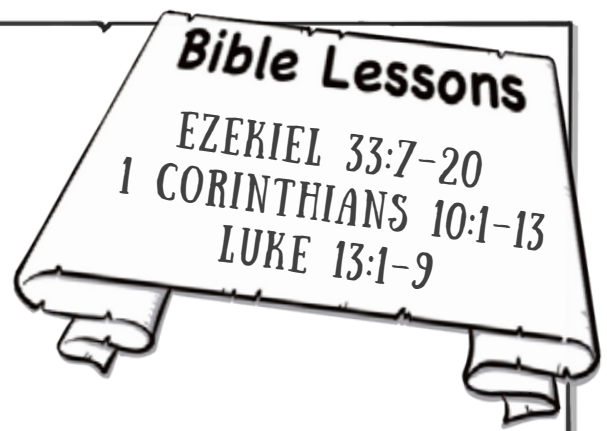
- Luke 13:34b (ESV)



"Can you colour the mother hen
as she gathers her chicks?"

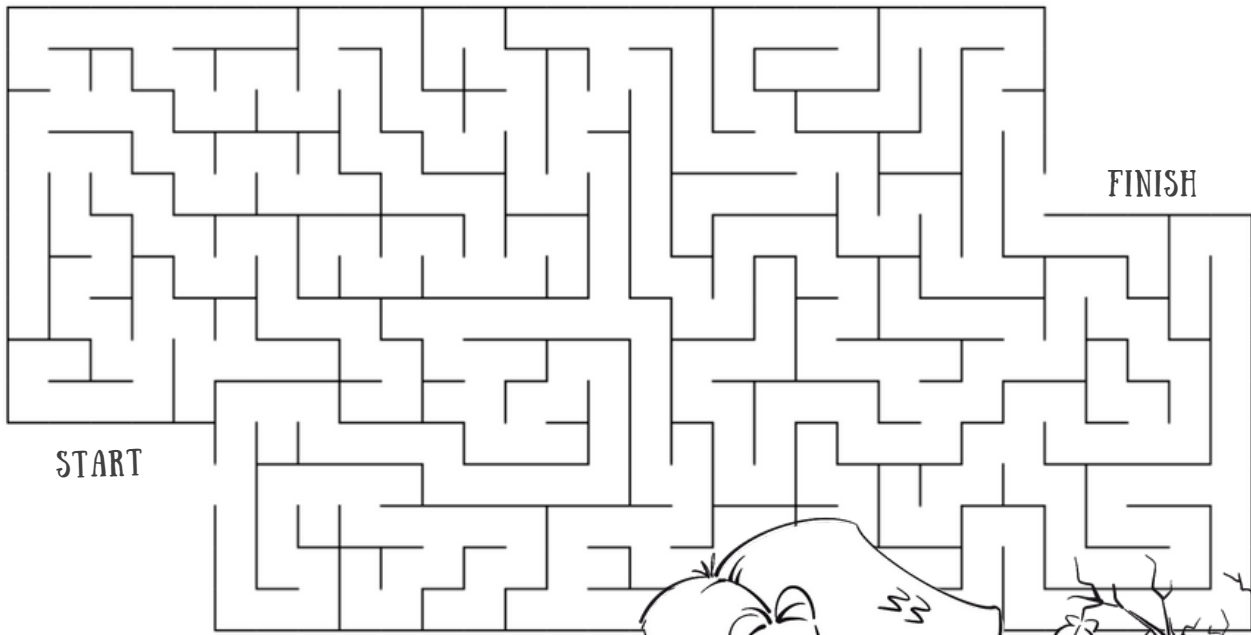


Kids Lectionary Learning 3RD SUNDAY IN LENT



Today in our readings we hear warnings, encouragement as we encounter temptations, and a parable from Jesus about a fig tree.

Grab your Bibles and let us hear from God's Word as we continue our journey through Lent.



"A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none"

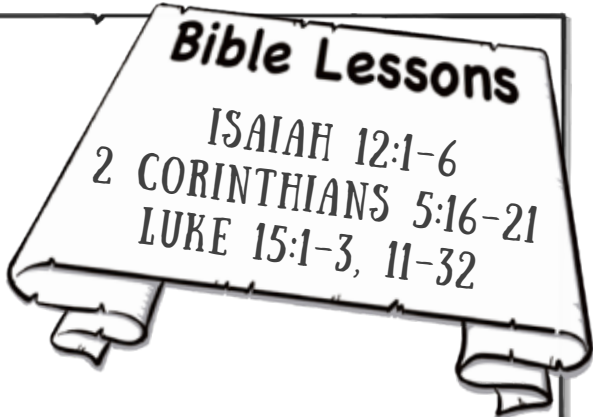
- Luke 13:6 (ESV)



Can you colour Lil' Lou as he tries to weed and grow his fig tree?

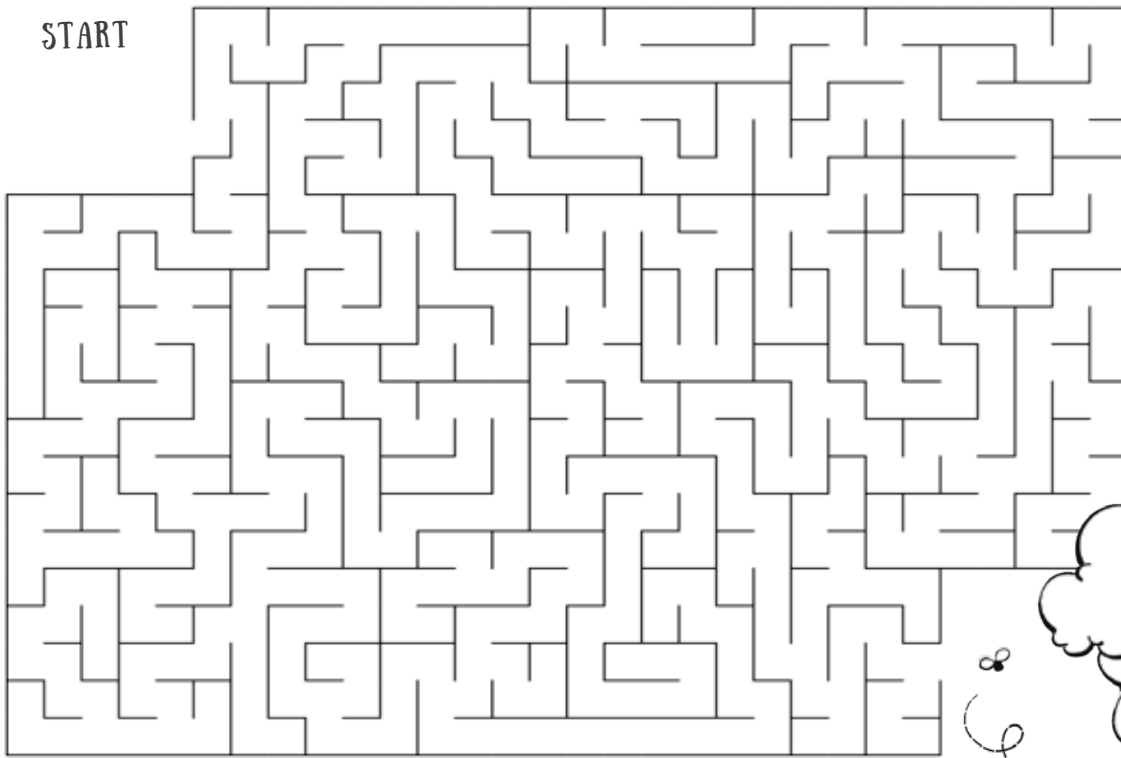


Kids Lectionary Learning
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT



Today in our readings we hear Isaiah proclaim that God is his "strength and song". We learn about being a "new creation" in Christ. And we get to read that amazing parable about a prodigal son. But not just the son, also the father who runs out to meet his son, and the response of the older brother. Grab your Bibles and let's learn more.

START



FINISH



"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him."

- Luke 15:20 (ESV)



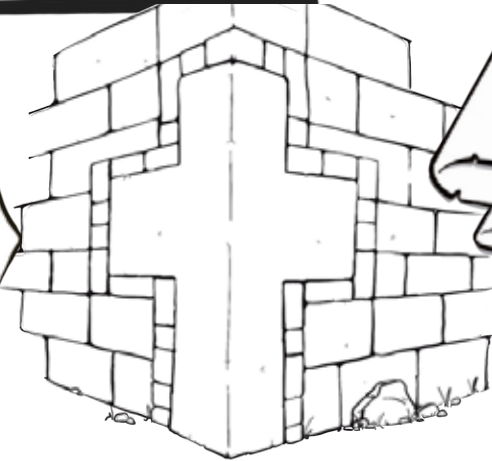
Kids Lectionary Learning FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Bible Lessons

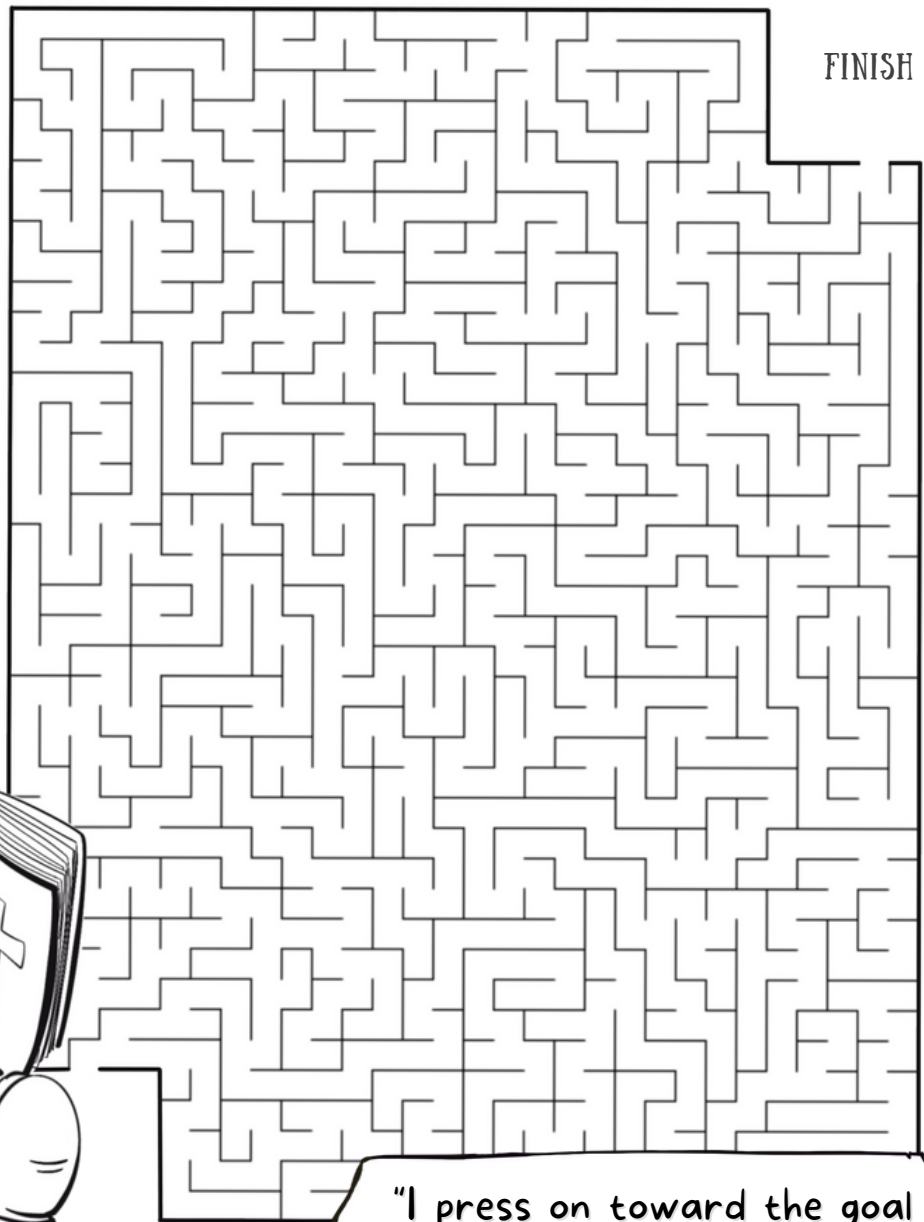
ISAIAH 43:16-21
PHILIPPIANS 3:8-14
LUKE 20:9-20

"The stone that
the builders rejected
has become
the cornerstone"

- Luke 20:17b



Today is the last
Sunday before
Palm Sunday.
And we are blessed to
hear Isaiah proclaim
God giving "water in
the wilderness", Saint
Paul talking about
pressing on "towards
the goal". And we hear
a parable from Jesus,
and the prophecy
about Christ who is
our "cornerstone".



START

"I press on toward the goal for
the prize of the upward call of
God in Christ Jesus."

- Philippians 3:14 (ESV)

Can you colour Lil' Lou and then help
him "press on" through the maze?