



The Spirit of St. Paul's

FEBRUARY 2025

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN
www.stpaulslutheran.ca

PASTOR'S CORNER

...in Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22). That's our predicament as human beings who are born in the sin we inherited from Adam. It's not a pleasant reality. Some of us think about death and dying a lot. Some of us try not to think about it at all. But the truth is we live in a finite and dying world. It's been in the process of dying ever since Adam and Eve elected themselves gods and excluded themselves from the Tree of Life. We can try to ignore it and escape it, but it won't work. The author of the book of Hebrews describes the fear we have over death as a lifelong slavery (Hebrews 2:15). The fear of death can create all kinds of trouble in our lives and can rob us of joy and hope. It can enslave us. But Jesus came to set us free.

"...in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). There is another reality that is just as real as, but even more powerful than, death—that is the reality of the life God brings. Yes, in Adam all die. But in Christ, we are all made alive. Christianity is the good news that there is forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in the midst of this dying world. This is God's gift of life for us in exchange for Jesus' death.

Jesus Christ came that we may have life, and have it abundantly (John 10:10).

Life has entered this dying world in person, in Jesus Christ. In Jesus the fullness of God shares our flesh and blood to be our Saviour. Jesus is the antidote to death. In the Gospel of St. John, Jesus teaches this about Himself: "I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is

the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:47-51). Jesus is the source of heavenly life and those who believe in Him share in a life that transcends the grave. There is nothing to fear, not even death. There is life in Christ and His life is for you.

God's blessings, Pastor Keith

Pancakes and Ashes

This pictures takes us back a ways—to 2011 to be exact.

On Ash Wednesday (March 5) pancakes will be served starting at 5:15 p.m. (actually a Shrove Tuesday tradition reinvented) and worship will begin at 7:00 p.m. In 2011, between pancakes and worship, dried palm branches from Palm Sunday 2010 were burned to make the charcoal used to imprint the cross on

foreheads during worship. Will the creating of ashes happen in 2025? Come and see.



Reminders

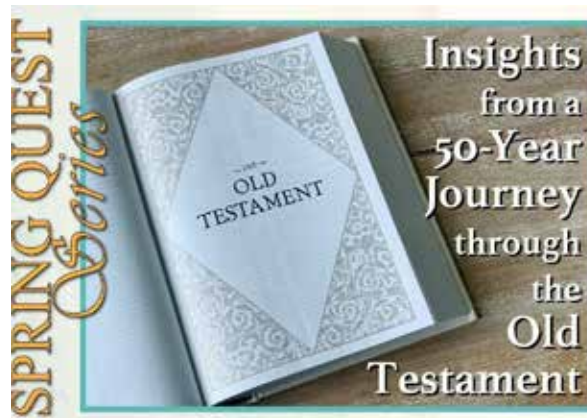
- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.
- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.
- LWMLC mites and society offerings may be put in the offering plate in an envelope separate from your church offering, 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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The Spring 2025 Quest course provided by Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, will be led by Dr. Joel Heck, interim president of the seminary, on four successive Tuesdays beginning February 11. His topic is the Old Testament, and these lectures will offer some of the most important insights he has learned about the Old Testament during his ministry.

The course will begin each night at 7:00 p.m. , with both in-person attendance and a livestreaming option. Two lectures each night will guide us through some important Old Testament topics. Time will be allowed for discussion and a ten-minute break with refreshments will be included each night between the two lectures.

Among questions to be addressed are these: Who wrote Genesis 1, the chapter recording events before the first humans were created? How old is the earth? Does the doctrine of creation figure prominently in the New Testament? What does the book of Ruth teach us about family and fulfillment? How accurate is the Genesis timeline of events in the lives of Jacob and Joseph? Is there archaeological evidence of the Israelites living in the Nile Delta during the time of Joseph? What is “the Waterway of Joseph”? What caused the seven years of famine

in Egypt during Joseph’s lifetime? How could God command Joshua to exterminate the Canaanites? Was the way of salvation different in the Old Testament than in the New Testament? Can we make sense of all the sacrifices and celebrations outlined in Leviticus? Does the Old Testament teach “salvation by works” while the New Testament teaches “salvation by grace”?

Week 1 (Tuesday, February 11)

Hour 1: The Signature of God: The Trinity in Genesis 1

Hour 2: Dating the Creation: Thousands or Billions of Years Ago?

Week 2 (Tuesday, February 18)

• Hour 1: Ancient Records and the Structure of Genesis

• Hour 2: The Book of Ruth: From Emptiness to Fullness

Week 3 (Tuesday, February 25):

• Hour 1 & 2: The Story of Joseph (Parts 1 & 2)

Week 4 (Tuesday, March 4):

• Hour 1: The Number One Ethical Problem in the Old Testament

• Hour 2: Potpourri: God’s Oneness, the Religion of the Old Testament, Creation in the New Testament, the Genesis Genealogies, the Judah Oracle, Practical Issues in the Book of Leviticus.

Keep watch on the seminary’s website (<https://www.concordiasem.ab.ca/>) for coming links.

The great "St. Paul's Chili Cook-off"



Thanks to the Board of Parish Fellowship for a great event.

And the winners...

Don Miester (left) won the prize for the hottest chili. Owen Mitchell won for the most unusual chili and also for the favourite chili. Congratulations!

STEWARDSHIP

CHRIST'S LIFE, AND LOVE, AND LIGHT

*Open our eyes Lord to see Your love's intent,
To know with minds and hearts its depth and height
May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ's life, and love, and light. (LSB 788)*

As stewards enter the month of February, it is fitting that we look at the last stanza of the stewardship hymn, "Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness" (LSB 788). It is in these words we see that the heart of stewardship is indeed love. Love has flowed from our Lord to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This love is then to flow from us to others. Being a conduit of love is really the central task of what it means to be a steward. The Lord entrusts us with His love that reconciles us to Himself, so that we might be stewards of the Gospel reconciliation that is freely given through us to those around us.

If we don't see this love from God to us, then through us, to others, our eyes will be closed not just to the needs of those around us. They will also be closed to the very heart of the Gospel itself. This is why the hymnist prays that the Lord would "Open our eyes, Lord, to see Your love's intent, To know with minds and hearts its depth and height."

Only when we are immersed in God's Holy Word, washed in Holy Baptism's life-giving water and fed on the holy, precious, body

and blood of Jesus in the Holy Supper, will the Spirit be able to open our eyes to see the Lord's loving intent for us, and those we know and love. Sin blinds us. It makes us think that we are the centre of our world, and our pleasure is the key.

In the Word, the Lord shows us the depth and height of His love. The depth of that love is what moved Him from His throne in heaven into our world. There He would don our human flesh, walk the dusty roads of Palestine, and set His face toward Jerusalem. Once there we get to see the height of His love, as He is elevated on a Roman cross to die a death that we deserve. But that would not be the end. He would be lowered into a tomb for three days. On that third day we then see the heights of love ascended to in His resurrection. This resurrection is already ours too!

The depth and height of this love poured out on us by the Holy Spirit then is distributed through us to others. Christ's servant love is shown in our servant love. The hymn utters the prayer of every Christian steward:

*May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ's life, and love, and light.*

This is the task for which stewards were originally created. Bearing the image of creation and redemption, we reflect Christ's love to those around us. The light of Christ shining through us to others is the true stewardship to

which we are called. It takes place in our homes. It is lived out in our workplaces and classrooms. As we bear the life, love and light received in Word and Sacrament, we carry it out in service to our neighbour and for the glory of God!

Forgive us, Lord, when our stewardship of thankfulness is shallow or lacking! Fill us with Your life, love and light! Not just for us, but through us to those we know and love, that they may know Your life, love and light for them!

YEAR-END AT ST. PAUL'S

As we are in the process of closing our records and finalizing our 2024 year-end activity, we are not able to give you final results for the year. However, we do expect to end the year with a small surplus. Again, we thank you for your generosity and for being good and faithful stewards to make this happen. God continues to bless us to enable us to carry out our mission and ministry!

TAX RECEIPTS

Some of you may have heard or have been following a news story announced by the federal government on December 30, 2024, that it was planning to extend the deadline for charitable gifts made in January and February 2025, allowing them to be used as a charitable donation on an individual's 2024 tax return. The Board of Stewardship has been following this report

continued next page

Stewardship, continued
including a news report dated January 23, 2025, confirming that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will recognize those receipts on 2024 tax returns. Due to this change and to give donors the tax receipts they may need, we will be issuing tax receipts for the period January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024, as we have always done but in addition, we

will be issuing tax receipts for the period January 1, 2025, to February 28, 2025. Donors will have the choice whether to use the January 1 to February 28, 2025, donations on their 2024 tax return or to hold them and claim them on their 2025 tax return. We will then issue another final charitable receipt for ten-month period March 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025, so donors will have a

full twelve-month period to claim their charitable donations. There may be some additional details coming from CRA but this is what we know as of right now. We will advise you if there are any significant changes to these plans. If you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact Sandy at the church office or the Board of Stewardship.

*Blessings and Peace
Board of Stewardship*

EVANGELISM and PUBLIC RELATIONS

NO GREATER LOVE!



As the world around us encourages us to express our love to others in the form of hearts and flowers, I am reminded of the words our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ spoke to His disciples (and us), “*Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends*” (John 15:13 ESV). Jesus most certainly demonstrated the depth of His love for us by His saving work on the cross that reconciled us to our Heavenly Father and permits His love to shine through us for all the world to see.

The descriptions of love that St. Paul included in his letters to the Romans and Corinthians have also transcended generations. I have heard them read at weddings

and funerals. I have incorporated them into greetings sent to couples whose years of marriage spanned decades, and included them in messages of comfort expressed to loved ones during times of change and challenge. I have treasured their valuable lessons as I have attempted to share the good news of God’s amazing love that is ours through His Son, our Lord and Saviour. As the apostle John points out, “*We love because He first loved us*” (1 John 4:19 ESV).

God’s Everlasting Love

“..If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the One who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:31b-39 ESV).

The Way of Love

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to

continued next page

Evangelism and PR, continued
remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things,

believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For

now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:1-13 ESV).

*Verla Schmirler
 Board of Evangelism and
 Public Relations*

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity (Colossians 3:12-14 NIV).

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity (Proverbs 17:17 NIV).

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever” (1 Peter 1:22-25a NIV).

The Greatest Commandment

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:28-31 NIV).

Listen!

by Henny Derbecker
Clifford, Ontario



LISTEN! Do you hear that bird chirping? Can you hear the

wind rustling through the leaves of the birch tree? Can you hear the crickets and the frogs singing? You can only hear these sounds if you sit quietly and listen for them. There are so many disruptions and so much noise around us that often we cannot hear the beautiful quiet sounds of God's world.

It is the same with the people around us—our friends and family. There is so much noise and distraction we often don't hear what someone is telling us. It is hard to listen and really pay attention to what another is saying. If a person really listens, they hear not only the words but also the feelings behind those words. How often have you been in a conversation with your mind thinking ahead to what you will say, taking your concentration away from what your friend is

expressing.

Proverbs 18:13 (NIV) says, "He who answers before listening—that his is folly and his shame." And an anonymous quote says, "A good listener is a silent flatterer." How true, nothing is more flattering than someone who gives us their full attention as they listen to us. It means they think that what we have to say is important and, by extension, that we are important. We tend to gravitate toward friends who listen to us, those who are open-hearted and non-judgmental. We also are inclined to run the other way when we see someone coming who always talks and never listens.

A Greek philosopher, Epictetus, said, "We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." If only that were true! Most of us go through life as if we have two mouths and one ear! We forget that the less we speak the more we hear. You cannot take note of what someone is saying if you are talking.

God is a wonderful listener. Psalm 66:19 says, "But truly God has listened; He has attended to the voice of my prayer." In Exodus 3:7 we read, "Then the Lord said, 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard

their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings.'" Whenever we talk or pray to our Lord He listens, and He is never too busy to be there with us.

We must also listen to God. We will not hear what He has to say to us if our mind is full of anxiety and distractions. God spoke to Elijah in a gentle whisper, not in the fire, earthquakes or wind. You have to listen very carefully to hear a whisper. We must be quiet, meditate on His Word as we read the Bible, and pray to our Saviour. We need a place where no one will disturb us, where we can leave the troubles of the world behind us for a while.

God speaks to us through His Holy Spirit, through His Word, and He sends His messages through other believers. How often has a Christian friend come at just the right time, listened, and offered us help and advice.

Take time to listen; to God, and to anyone who comes into your life needing a listening ear.

We pray

Dear Lord, quiet our minds and our thoughts so we can truly listen and hear what You want us to hear. Help us listen to Your Word so we will be prepared to pay full attention to anyone You put in our path.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Serve
Give
someone
100% of your
attention the
next time
you have a
conversation.

Reprinted from *Lutheran Women's Missionary League—Canada, Inc., website devotions, 2011.*

EDUCATION

KIDS CORNER

GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

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

Hey Kids!

For the month of February, some of the Bible readings are from 1 Corinthians 15. In this chapter, the Apostle Paul talks about something really important: the resurrection of Jesus. Paul explains that Jesus came back to life after He died, which is the biggest part of what we Christians believe. He begins by reminding everyone that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and then rose again on the third day. Lots of people saw Jesus after He came back to life, including Peter and even more than 500 others at one time! This shows that Jesus' resurrection really happened! Paul also talks about WHY the resurrection is super important. He says that if Jesus didn't come back to life, then our faith

in Him would be pointless. But, because Jesus DID rise from the dead, we can know that one day we will be raised from the dead too, and live forever with God.

Paul uses an example of a seed to help us understand. He says that when you plant a seed, it has to die in the ground before it can grow into a new plant. In the same way, when we die, our bodies will be changed into new, amazing bodies when we are raised to life again. At the end of the chapter, Paul encourages everyone to stay strong in their faith and keep doing good things, because they know their work to serve God and others is not in vain. It's all part of God's big plan for our lives. So remember, 1 Corinthians 15 teaches us that JESUS'

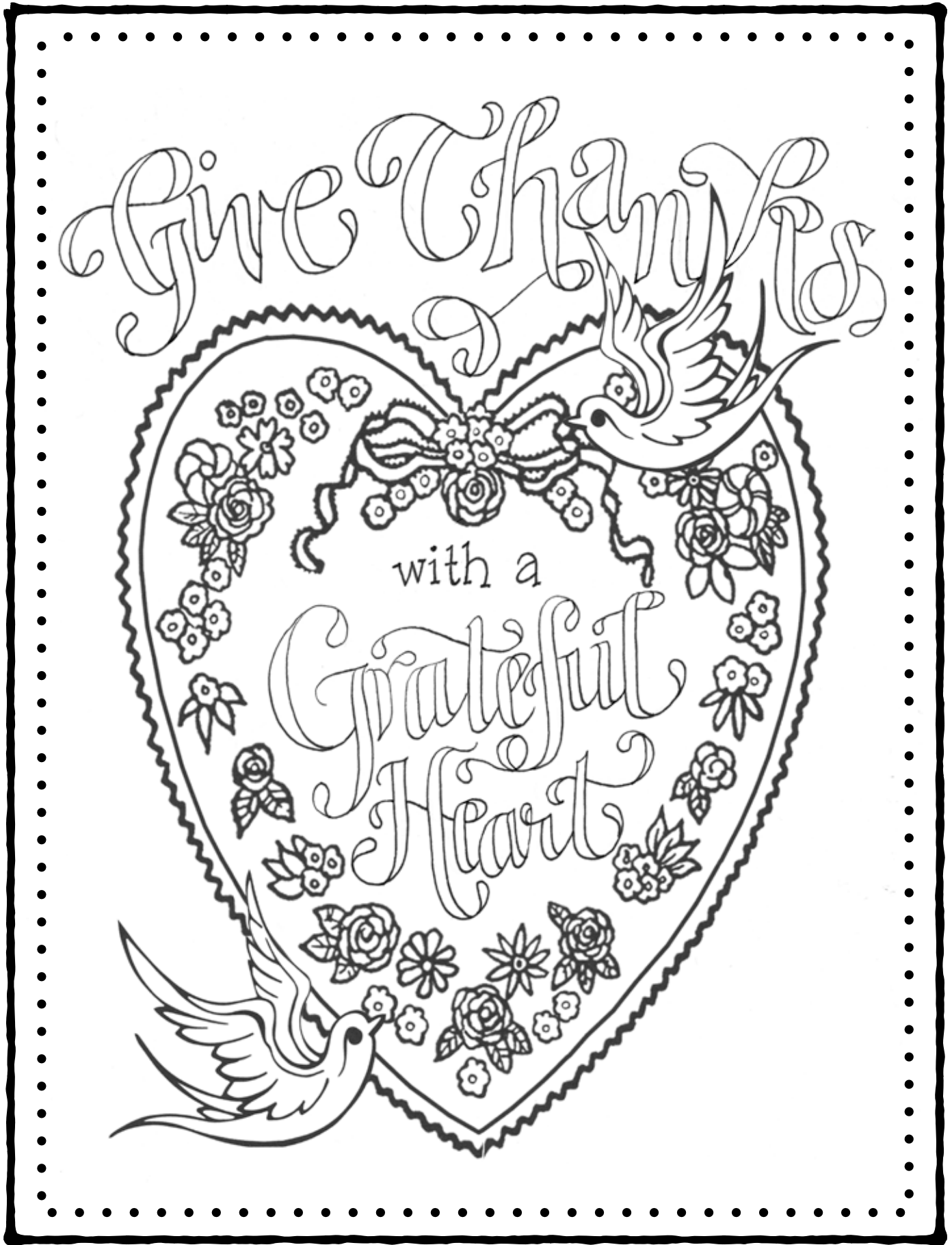
RESURRECTION is REAL and gives us a certain hope for our own resurrection and eternal life with God in heaven!

Valentine's Day is about showing love to others. We can be God's hands and feet when we allow His love to shine through us. Let's make that special day last all month, or better yet, all year!

This month, the activity sheets are from a few years ago when the Bible passages were the same as they are this year. You can still check out this year's activity sheets at Ill.ca. They may have different pictures and activities to do! Have fun and God bless you!

Mrs. Denise Timm
For the Board of Christian
Education and Youth

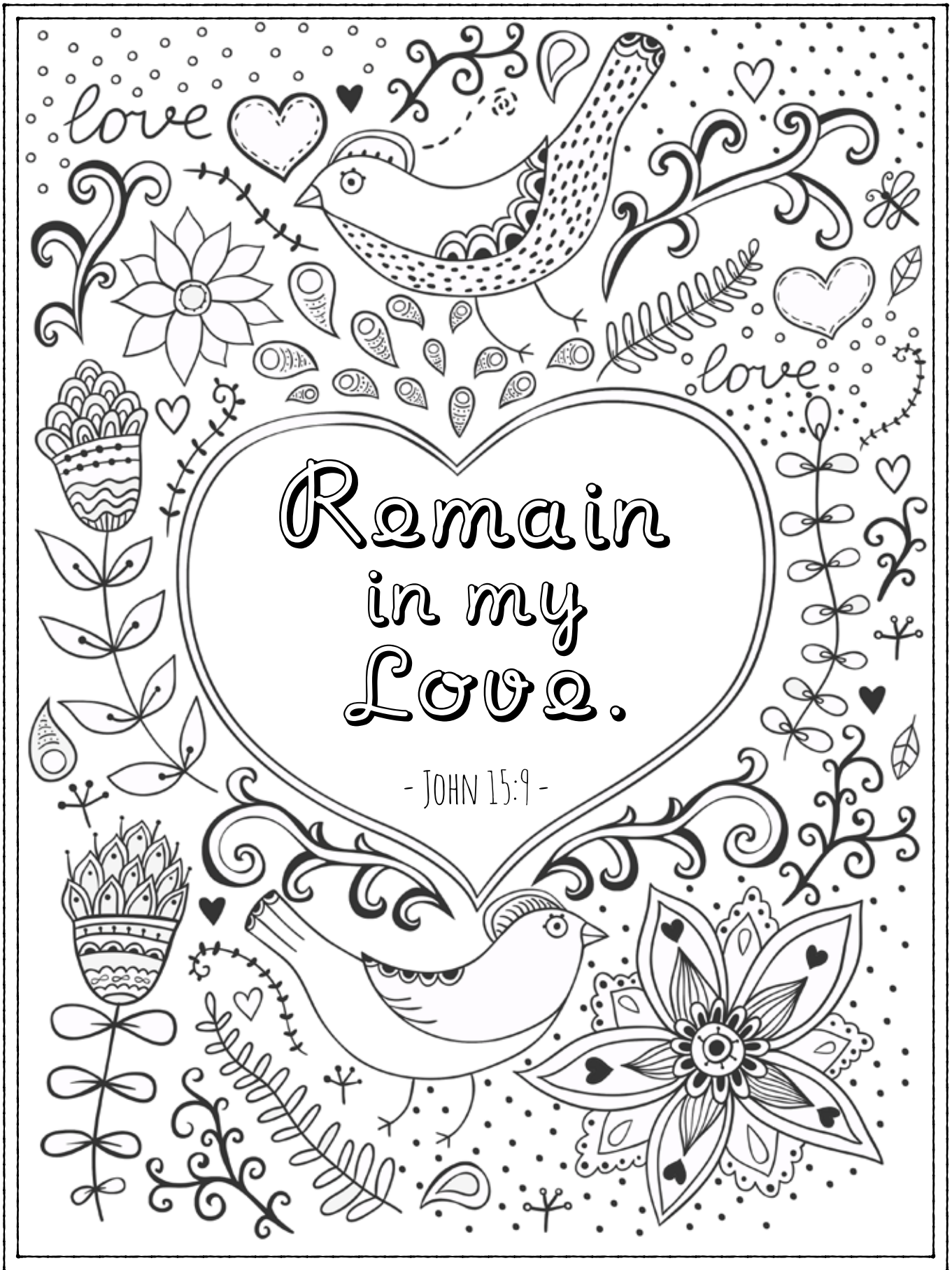




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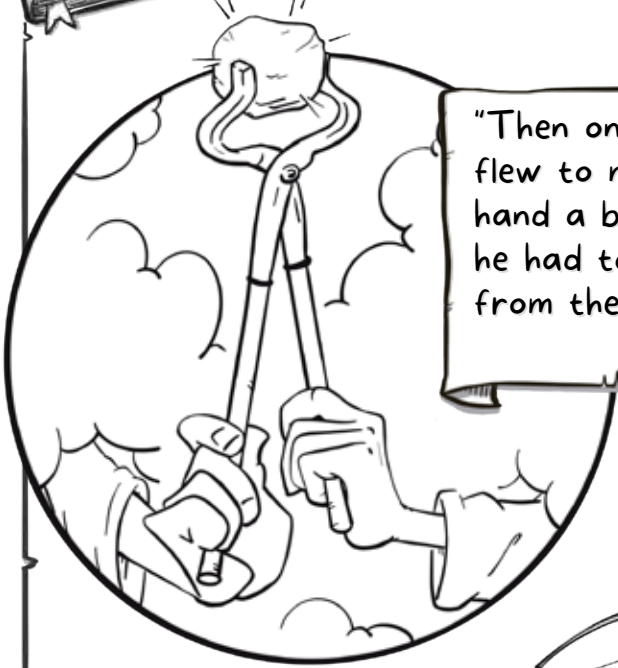




Kids Lectionary Learning
5TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Bible Lessons

ISAIAH 6:1-8;
1 COR. 14:12B-20;
LUKE 5:1-11



"Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar."

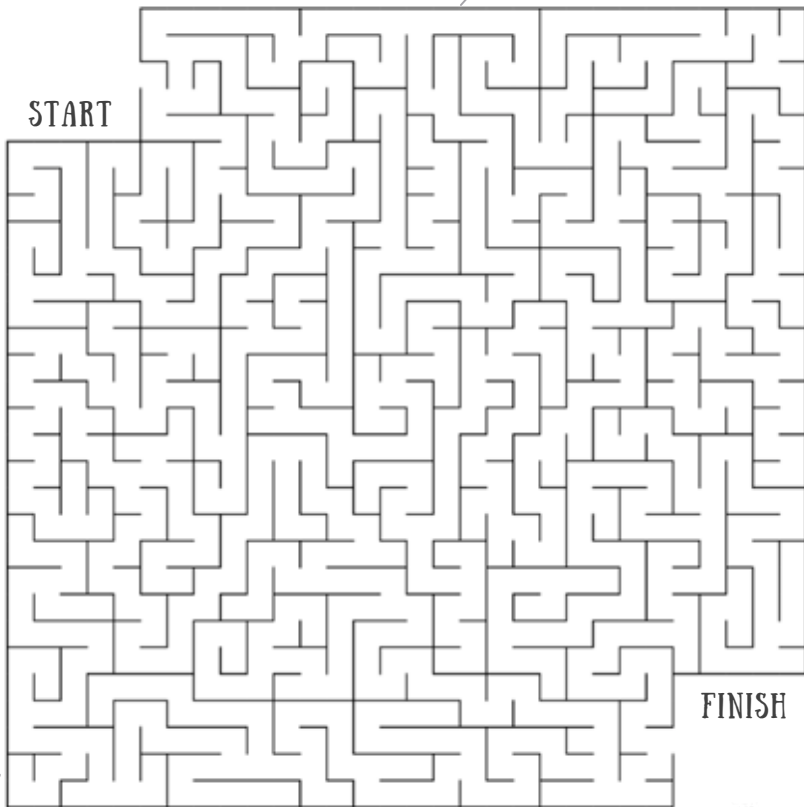
- Isaiah 6:6 (ESV)

Today we hear about an angel with a burning coal, encouragement to build each other up, and some really good fishing advice and call from Jesus to follow Him.

Grab your Bibles and let's learn more.

Lil' Lou is a bit confused. He remembers the verse in our from Luke 5:10 about "catching men", but he is pretty sure that using a fishing pole isn't what Jesus was talking about. What did Jesus mean when He told Simon he would be, "catching men"?

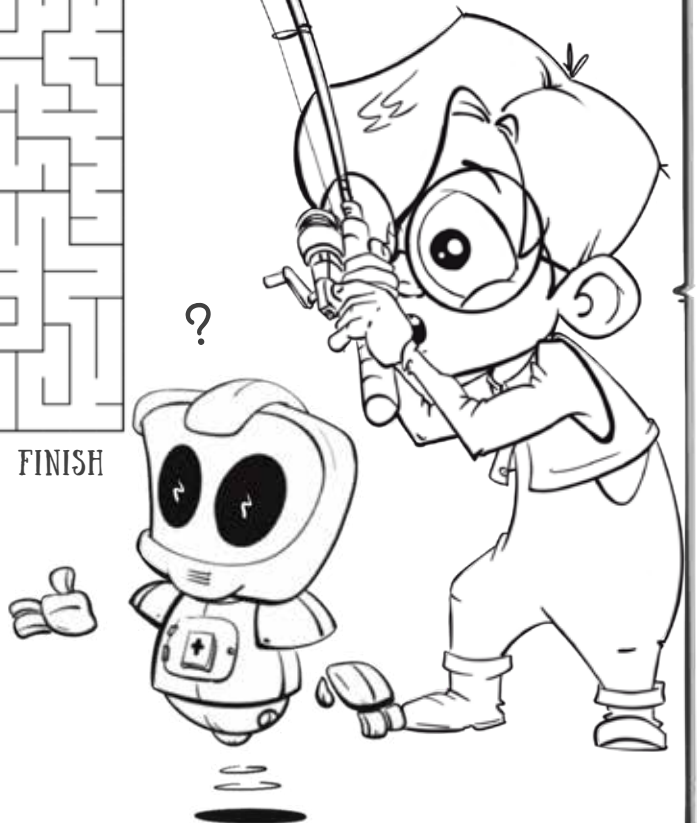
START



FINISH

"Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

- Luke 5:10 (ESV)





Kids Lectionary Learning

5TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

"Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature."

- 1 Cor. 14:20 (ESV)

WORD SEARCH

In our gospel reading today we hear how Jesus does an amazing thing for some fishermen, and then calls them follow Him.

Read through Luke 5:1-11 and then try and find the words in our Word Search.

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| HEAR | TAUGHT |
| WORD | CATCH |
| BOATS | FISH |
| WASHING | FOLLOWED |
| NETS | JESUS |

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



"But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking."

- Luke 5:5-6 (ESV)

Kate is having trouble moving just one fish.

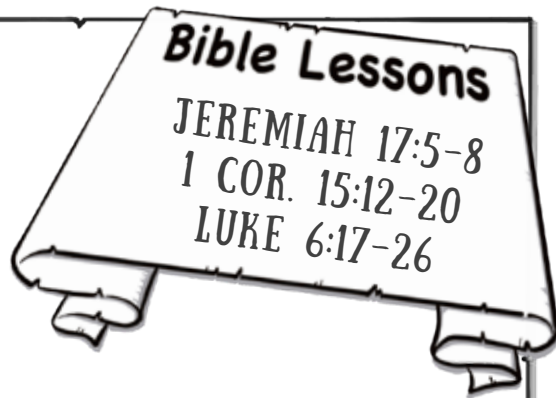
Imagine how many fish must have been in the nets to cause them to start breaking. **Wow.**

Jesus did an amazing thing that day, and He does amazing things for us today, too. Jesus gives us gifts of love, faith, and much more.

What is something you are thankful that Jesus has given you?



Kids Lectionary Learning 6TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY



"the firstfruits"

- 1 Cor. 15:20 (ESV)

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

Today we read about trusting God, the importance of Jesus' resurrection from the dead, and Jesus giving warnings as well as teaching His disciples about who is "blessed".

Grab you Bibles and let's go!

WORD SEARCH

In our gospel reading from Luke 6:17-26 we hear Jesus proclaim blessings and warnings. And it may surprise you who He says is blessed.

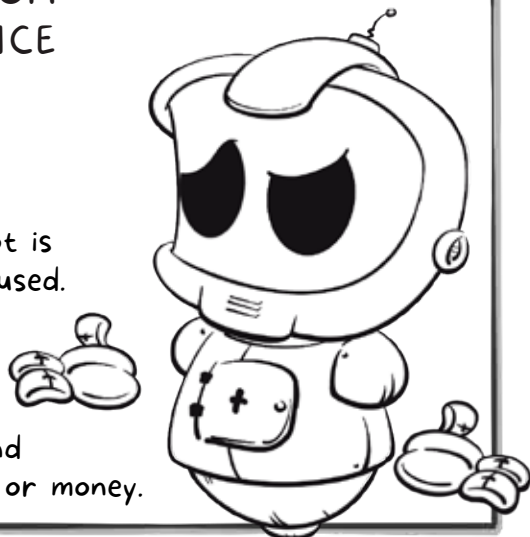
Read or listen to Luke 6:17-26 and then find the words from that passage in our word search.

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| BLESSED | WOE |
| POOR | RICH |
| HUNGRY | FULL |
| SATISFIED | HEAR |
| WEEP | HEALED |
| LAUGH | |
| REJOICE | |

"Blessed are you..."

- Luke 6:20 (ESV)

Colour BB as he learns that we are blessed because of JESUS and not because of food, or money.





Kids Lectionary Learning 6TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

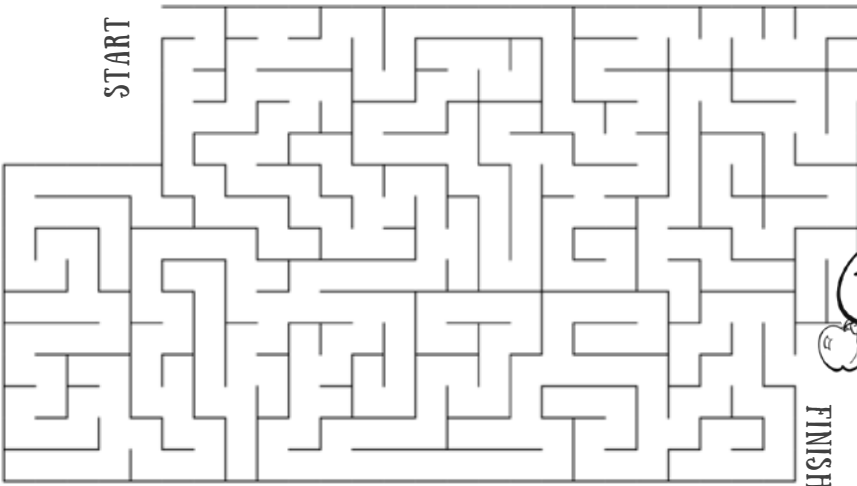
"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,"
- Jeremiah 17:7 (ESV)



Kate and Hughie have found a shrub out in the dessert. In our first reading we hear Jeremiah talk about a shrub out in the dessert. What does he say is like being a shrub planted in the dessert?

Lil' Lou and Pete the pigeon are amazed at how well the tree by the water has grown. What does Jeremiah 17:7-8 say makes someone like a tree planted by water?

"like a shrub in the desert"



Can you find the 9 apples that are hidden on this page?

"Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven"
- Luke 6:23 (ESV)

"like a tree planted by water"



Kids Lectionary Learning
7TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Bible Lessons

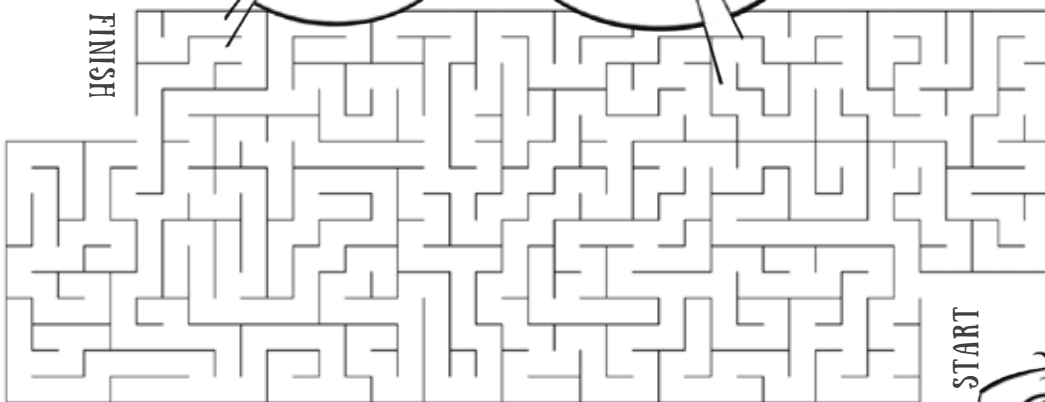
GENESIS 45:3-15
1 COR. 15:21-26,30-42
LUKE 6:27-38

"I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt."



And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life."

- Gen 45:4-5 (ESV)



"But I say to you who hear,
Love your enemies, do good to those
who hate you, bless those who curse
you, pray for those who abuse you."

- Luke 6:27-28 (ESV)



Lil' Lou is thinking about the amazing story of Joseph and his brothers. Can you colour the picture and finish the maze as we learn about Jesus and forgiveness.