



The Spirit of St. Paul's

FEBRUARY 2026

PASTOR'S CORNER

In the middle of February, we will be moving from the season of Epiphany into the season of Lent.

The season of Epiphany focuses on the revealing of Jesus as the Saviour of the Nations. During Christmas we celebrate the gift of Jesus born in our flesh to save us.

During Epiphany we focus on the “unwrapping” of that gift. Epiphany began on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, which commemorates the visit of the Magi. The first Sunday after that is the Baptism of Our Lord when the world was given a clear epiphany of who Jesus is. St. Mark describes it this way: “In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when [Jesus] came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son; with You I am well-pleased’” (Mark 1:9-11).

Epiphany concludes with the Transfiguration of Our Lord, when Jesus shone intensely bright before Peter and James and John. Maybe even more incredible is

that He was having a discussion with two men, Moses and Elijah, who had been dead for centuries! During the Transfiguration we see God providing another clear epiphany that echoes the one from our Lord’s Baptism. St. Matthew reports: “...a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him’” (Matthew 17:5).

The events of Jesus’ Baptism and Transfiguration provide a nice bookend to the season of Epiphany as God the Father declares from heaven that Jesus is the Saviour foretold.

The transition from the season of Epiphany to Lent is very noticeable. We move from focusing on Jesus’ divinity as revealed through His miracles and teachings to Him humbly submitting Himself to bear and overcome the world’s sin.

During Lent we recognize that our sin is part of the fallenness of the world and is part of why Jesus suffered and died. And so, we journey with our Lord through the valley of death in the season of Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18.

To reflect the solemnity of this 40-day period of the Church Year, we take a liturgical break from singing a *Hymn of Praise* and we do not speak or sing Alleluias.

As we accompany our Lord through the valley of Lent we can look back to the Transfiguration, and all of the other epiphanies that we focused on, and we are reminded that Jesus truly is the Son of God. We also can look forward to the empty tomb of Easter that assures us that sin and death are defeated.

*God's blessings,
Pastor Keith*



Pictures on pages 4 and 5.

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. Send your ads to the editor.

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EVANGELISM and PUBLIC RELATIONS

GRACE!

The word “grace” has often been broken down as “God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.” I have also heard Pastor Keith explain it as “Receiving what we don’t deserve.” My ©1990 edition of Webster’s New World Dictionary includes the definition “God’s love and favour toward man.”

As I apply these descriptions to “grace” as it is presented in familiar Scripture readings and hymns, I am amazed at the deeper meaning that fills my mind. I am also more fully aware that many people on earth have yet to hear or need to be reminded of the good news of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom God’s love and favour comes to us.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about Him, and cried out, ‘This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me’). For from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father’s side, He has made Him known” (John 1:1, 14-18).

“And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33).

“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.” (Revelation 22:21)

Amazing Grace

¹ Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see

² The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures; He will my shield and portion be As long as life endures.

³ Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come; His grace has brought me safe thus far, His grace will lead me home.

⁴ Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail And mortal life shall cease, Amazing grace shall then prevail In heaven’s joy and peace.

⁵ When we’ve been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise Than when we’d first begun.

(LSB hymn #744 – Text (English) & Tune: public domain)

I pray each faithful saint is spurred to share the Good News of God’s Word with others who may not have heard . . . for God the Holy Spirit leads and gives us words to sow as seeds according to the hearer’s needs . . . and it is by God’s grace alone that faith in Christ makes us His own and fit to gather ‘round His throne . . . clothed in Christ’s righteousness and good, together with the multitude, where all will be just as it should! (vjs 2026)

*Verla Schmirler
 Board of Evangelism
 and Public Relations*

STEWARDSHIP

POINTING TO THE ROCK OF AGES

Health Ministry

January is usually the month when people devote themselves to forming new habits or revisiting old ones that have gone by the wayside during the busyness of the holiday season. But New Year's resolutions, if we're being honest with ourselves, rarely get "resolved" with the start of a new year. By February, it's easy to lose our zeal. That's because we are prone to have a "sprint" mentality when the reality is that the Christian life is more akin to a long-distance race. Paul says this in Philippians 3:14: *I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* Godliness is waking up every day remembering your baptism and walking throughout the day in baptismal grace. Godliness is self-control of body and discipline of spirit for the sake of God's name and for the good of neighbour. Godliness is having hope in the life to come while living faithfully and joyfully in the life we live now. Follow the ways and rhythms that Christ has set for His people in worship, in prayer, in community, in feasting and celebrating, and your year will be filled with the richness of Christ's good gifts.

Stewardship

Table of Duties: The Forgotten Stewardship Tool

Luther's Small Catechism is a magnificent tool. Joined with a well-used copy of the Holy Scriptures and an orthodox hymnal, the Christian is well equipped to

live a life of faithfulness to the Lord and service to the neighbour. First in German and now in English and just about any language known to man, this handy masterpiece has introduced generations of people to the central doctrine of justification by grace, through faith, on account of Jesus Christ. The Six Chief Parts have proven to be a faithful framework for a clear confession of the truth of the Gospel for nearly five hundred years!

But more than a textbook, the Small Catechism also serves well as a handbook for Christian living. As a part of its treasure, there is an element that teaches an extraordinarily strong message of stewardship. That hidden treasure that needs to be rediscovered is called the Table of Duties.

The Table of Duties is really nothing more than a categorized gathering of Bible verses. These verses are set apart for "various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities." Addressing pastors and people, government and citizens, husbands, wives, children, youth, workers and so many more, it very clearly lays out what faithful stewardship looks like. Even better, these assembled passages teach one important truth: we are stewards of one another!

The Table is much more than a "how-to" tool; it also lays out the interconnectedness that exists within the body of Christ. Pastors are described by what

continued next page

Pancakes and Ashes

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

On Ash Wednesday (February 18) 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 2026? Come and see.



Stewardship, continued

they are to be as stewards of the Word. 1 Timothy 3 highlights the characteristics of a faithful pastor. Even more, Titus 1 highlights the need for the pastor to be faithful for the sake of those under his care.

Those who hear the faithful preaching of the pastor are stewards of the pastor as well. 1 Corinthians 9 talks about the need for the people to support the livelihood of the pastor. Galatians 6 talks about how the hearers share in the good things that the pastor teaches. 1 Timothy 6 talks about the honor that is owed to the pastor, not because of WHO he is, but rather WHAT he is teaching! Hebrews 13 shows the impact of this stewardship on the pastor, that they perform their duties with joy. Joyful pastors and people are always going to be better stewards of the Gospel!

Outside the church this interdependent stewardship is

on display as well. Romans 13 highlights the respect necessary for the governing authorities. As citizens, the faithful steward is called to pay taxes (Matthew 22), pray for their leaders (1 Timothy 2) and that they should be ready to serve in the civil realm (Titus 3), because they are in these positions by God's direction (1 Peter 2).

These steward duties are in the home too! 1 Peter 3 and Colossians 3 shape the husband steward. Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3 shape the wife steward. Ephesians 6 form parental stewards and child stewards.

The Table of Duties is a wonderful place for the individual steward to learn how much our stewardship is more than just a "me and Jesus thing!" In fact, it ends with these words: "Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well share fare."

This is interdependent stewardship on clear display. As each learns

stewardship in this way, the more faithful we will be as a family, congregations, communities and the church at large.

STEWARDSHIP AT ST. PAUL'S

While it's too soon to provide 2025 year end results, we expect that we will end the year with a small surplus. Based on very generous offerings by members and others, our donation revenue in December exceeded our expectations and previous giving levels. This, along with our expected expenses in December, plus any other year-end accounting adjustments will likely see us end 2025 with a surplus in the \$5,000 to \$9,000 range. Thank-you for your ongoing support of time, talents and treasures to enable the congregation to fulfill our mission and ministry goals.

*Thanks be to God.
Board of Stewardship.*



Chili Cookoff 2026



Chili Cookoff 2026



EDUCATION

KIDS CORNER

GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

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



Hi Kids!

February is Transfiguration month which means we're getting close to Lent.

The Transfiguration is a special story in the Bible (Matthew 17:1-9) where Jesus shows his true glory to three of His disciples—Peter, James, and John. They are on a mountain and see Jesus shining brightly. Moses and Elijah, who had already died, appear with Him. This shows that Jesus is truly God's Son and that He came to save us. The disciples are amazed, and God's voice says, "This is my beloved Son; listen to Him!" This story reminds us that Jesus is both God and man. He is our Saviour, and we can trust Him. The Transfiguration helps us understand that Jesus is powerful and loving, and that we should listen to Him and follow His teachings every day.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent—a special time in the church where we get ready for Easter. On Ash Wednesday, we receive ashes on our foreheads in the shape of a cross. This helps us remember we are sorry for our sins and we need God's forgiveness. The ashes remind us that God made us from the dust of the earth and that He loves us even when we do things He doesn't want us to do. **Lent** lasts for forty days, not counting Sundays. During Lent, we think about Jesus' love for us and His journey to the cross. It's a time to pray, help others, and maybe give something up, like a favourite treat, to

remind us of Jesus' sacrifice. We can use Lent as a chance to grow closer to Jesus, remembering He died and rose again so we could be forgiven and have eternal life. We trust in Jesus' promise and look forward to celebrating His victory at Easter!

We also celebrate **Valentine's Day** in February. What one word could you use to describe both Valentine's Day and Lent? LOVE! Valentine's Day is when we show love to our family and friends with cards and kind words or treats. Lent is a time when we remember how much Jesus loves us, because He gave everything, including His life, to remove our sins so we could be close to God. So, whether it's Valentine's Day or Lent, it's a chance to think about love—loving God, loving others, and knowing that God ALWAYS loves us!

The next **Sunday school** class will be February 8 in the church basement.

I hope you enjoy learning about the Transfiguration, Ash Wednesday and Lent as you do the activity sheets at the end of this newsletter!

In Jesus' love,
Denise Timm
for the Board of Christian Education
and Youth



KIDS' LECTIONARY LEARNING

5TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

BIBLE LESSON: MATTHEW 5:13-20



... LET YOUR **LIGHT**
SHINE BEFORE OTHERS,
THAT THEY MAY
SEE YOUR GOOD DEEDS
AND **GLORIFY**
YOUR FATHER IN
HEAVEN.

Matthew 5:16

CONNECT THE DOTS

Draw lines
connecting the dots
from number
1 to 42 to show
a picture!



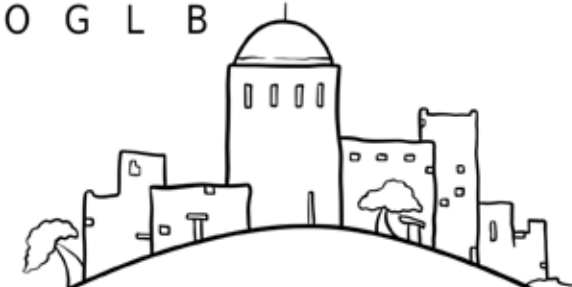


B Y P K D E N I H S
 W R D W C A W M E X
 E T L I C H T R A E
 G Y R F A T H E R J
 P F O P D A Q T M V
 G I W F H O G L Q Y
 Q R U L H N G A C J
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 H G O E A X U T N R
 I N W V I R K Z T D
 D D N A D N M A H W
 D M B E I O W H G B
 E Q U H P P O T I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

Word Search

See if you can find some of the important words in this week's bible verse!

EARTH	LAMP
FATHER	LIGHT
GLORIFY	SALT
GOOD	SHINE
HEAVEN	TOWN
HIDDEN	WORLD



"You are the **light** of the world. A town built on a hill **cannot** be **hidden.**"

Matthew 5:14



Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to be good salt and a shining light wherever I am. Amen.*

* From the Concordia Study Bible



KIDS' LECTIONARY LEARNING

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

BIBLE LESSON: MATTHEW 17:1-9

"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, WITH
WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED;
LISTEN TO HIM."

Matthew 17:5b



Today's story is about Jesus' transfiguration. This was when God showed to His disciples that Jesus is His true son!

Can you spot all of the people from our lesson in today's colouring page?



CRYPTOGRAM

Match the symbols to the letters and see what Jesus says to His disciples when they are afraid!

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
*	◇	▽	☉	☺	□	!	δ	⚡	α
K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
⊙	▣	⊖	⤴	↘	⌘	∞	◐	➤	⊗
U	V	W	X	Y	Z				
◓	✦	☻	◊	Ⓜ	⌛				

“

◐ ⚡ ➤ ☺ * ⤴ ☉ δ * ✦ ☺

”

⤴ ↘ □ ☺ * ◐

- Matthew 17:7b



Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, thank You for showing us that Jesus is Your Son. Help us to listen to Him and love Him. In Jesus' name, Amen.



KIDS' LECTIONARY LEARNING

ASH WEDNESDAY

BIBLE LESSON: JOEL 2:12-19

**THIS WEEK WE
LEARN ABOUT ASH
WEDNESDAY WHICH
IS THE BEGINNING OF
THE SEASON OF
LENT!**

On this day a cross of ashes is often drawn on our foreheads by the pastor. The ashes remind us that we are dirty in sin and need to be cleaned.

It can remind us of the first time the sign of the cross was made on us at our Baptism. We are cleaned through the waters of Baptism and washed clean from sin.





WORD SEARCH

Can you find these 12 words relating to Ash Wednesday and our Bible verse?

ALTAR
ASHES
BLESSING
CROSS
FORGIVE
GOD

GRACIOUS
JESUS
LENT
LOVE
REPENT
RETURN

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



... Return to the Lord
your God, for he is
gracious and merciful ...

Joel 2:13b



Prayer

Dear Jesus, please help me to do what you want me to do. Thank you for the life giving waters of Baptism that have washed us clean from sin.



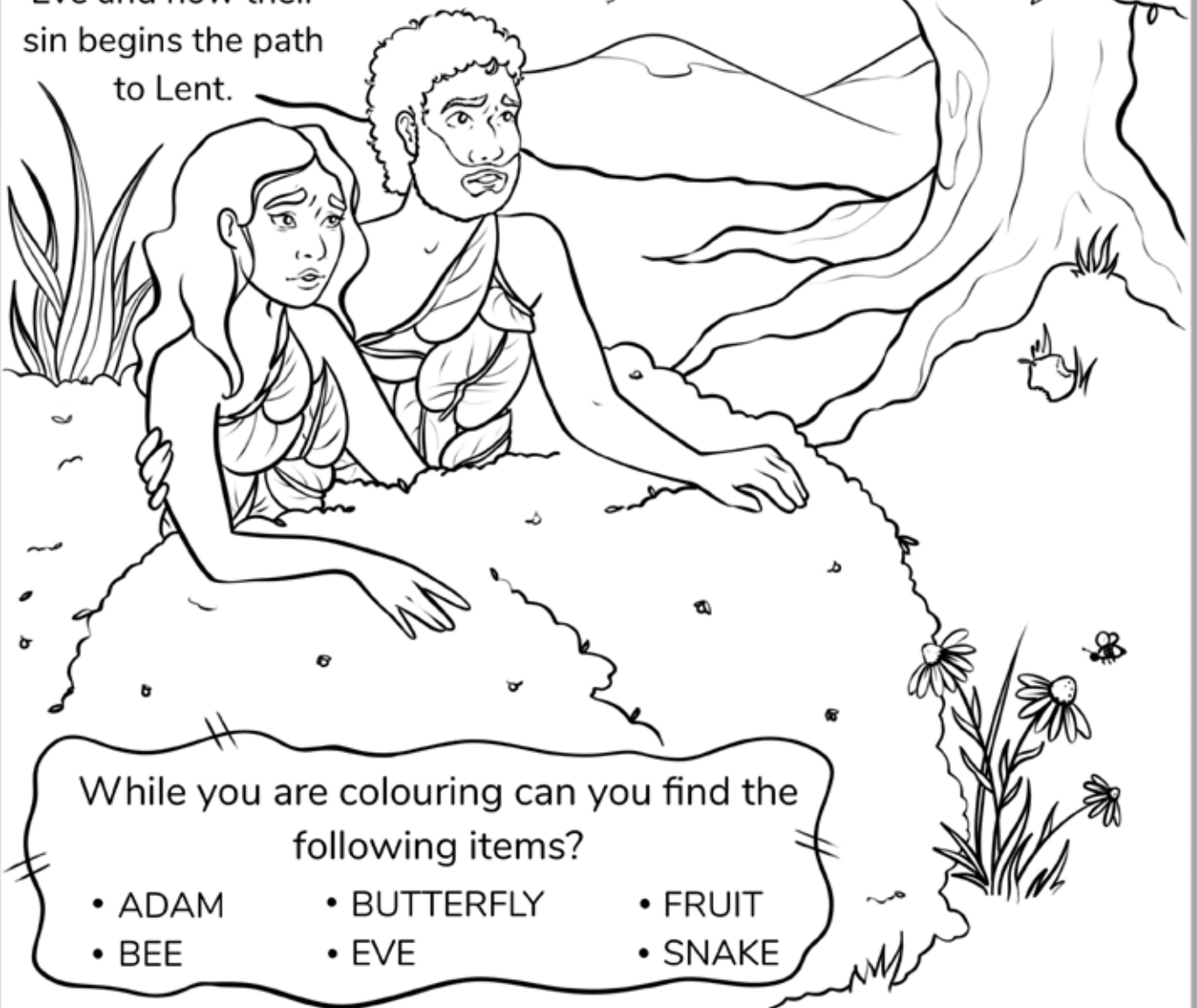
KIDS' LECTIONARY LEARNING

1ST SUNDAY IN LENT

BIBLE LESSON: GENESIS 3:1-21

**TODAY IS THE
FIRST SUNDAY
OF LENT!**

In today's bible story, we learn about Adam and Eve and how their sin begins the path to Lent.

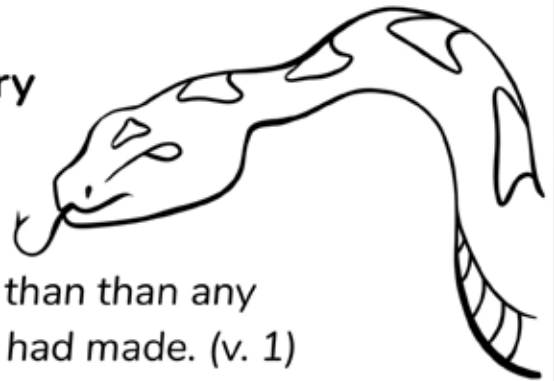


While you are colouring can you find the following items?

- ADAM
- BUTTERFLY
- FRUIT
- BEE
- EVE
- SNAKE

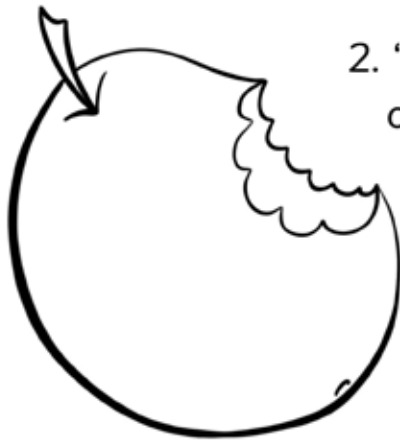


Can you follow along in our bible story today and fill in the blanks?



1. Now the _____ was more crafty than than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. (v. 1)

- a. Bunny b. Serpent c. Beetle



2. "But God said, 'You shall not eat of the _____ of the tree that is in the midst of the garden.'" (v. 3)

- a. Fruit b. Nuts c. Caterpillars

3. She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her _____ who was with her, and he ate. (v. 6)

- a. Dog b. Son. c. Husband

4. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the _____ in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. (v. 8)

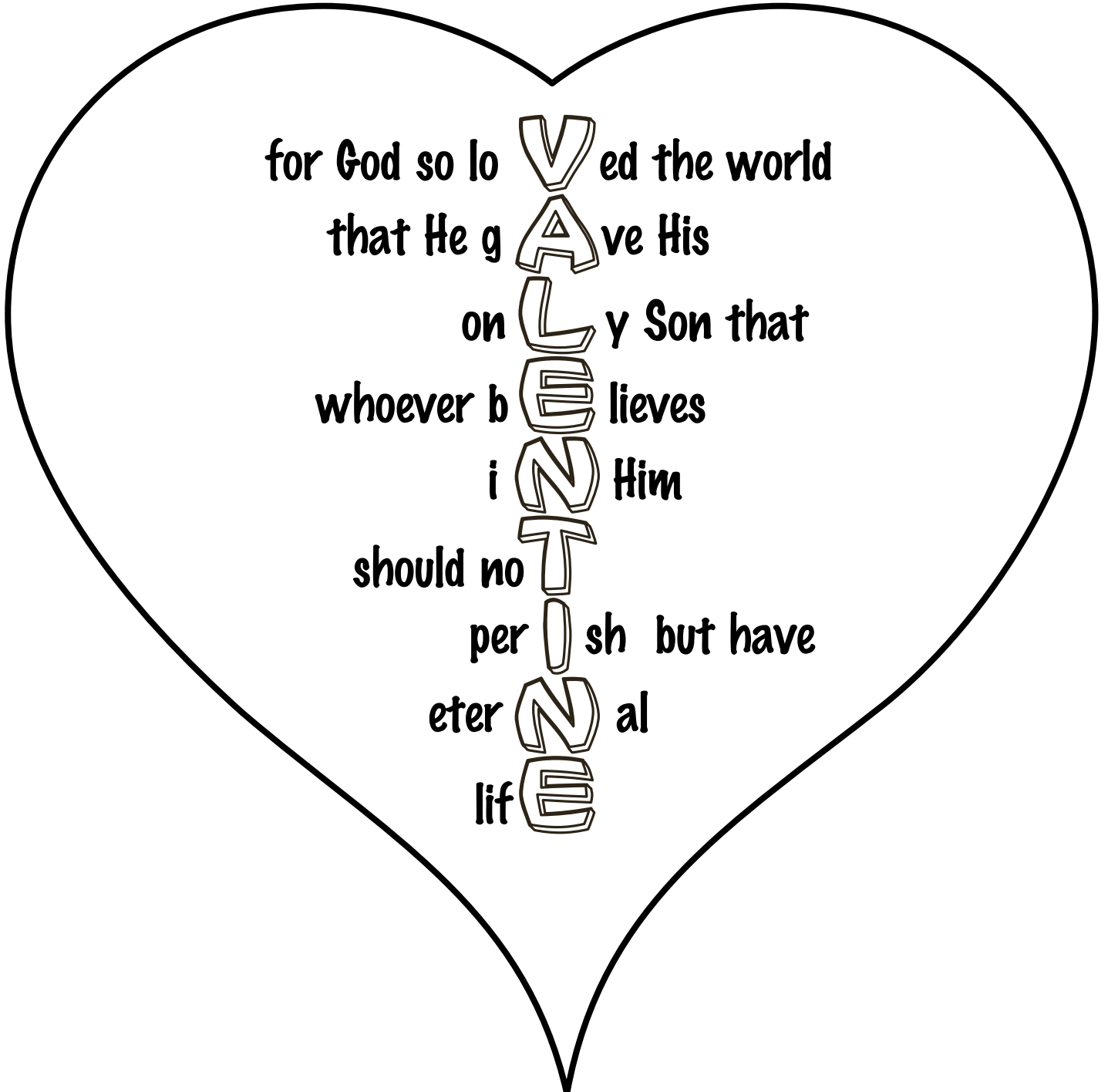
- a. Garden b. Street c. Desert



Prayer

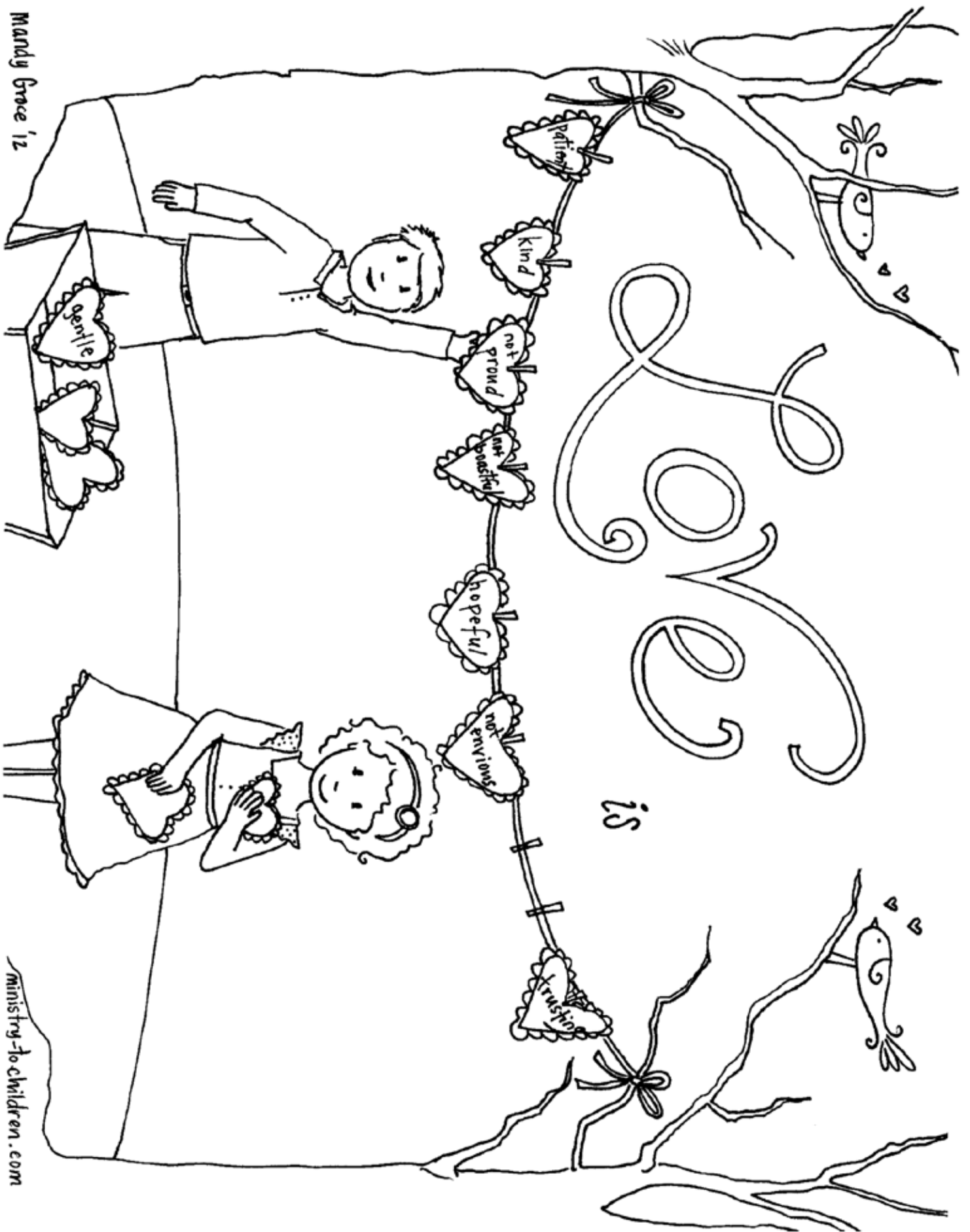
Dear Father in heaven, thank you for not stopping with Adam. Thank you for sending a "second Adam" to undo what Adam did. Thank you for your Son, our Saviour Jesus. Amen.

John 3:16



for God so lo **V**ed the world
that He g **A**ve His
on **L**y Son that
whoever b **E**lieves
i **N** Him
should no **T**
per **I**sh but have
eter **N**al
lif **E**

Mandy Grace '12



ministry-to-children.com