




Easter Love Letters from God



Resource and
Activity Pack



ZONDERkidz



Written by
Glenys Nellist
Illustrated by
Sophie Allsopp



INTRODUCTION

The resources and activities contained in this pack are designed to be used by families during Holy Week or children's ministry leaders during Easter. They are based on using the book *Easter Love Letters from God* by Glenys Nellist. The activities are geared toward 4-10 year-olds. The book contains seven stories. For each day of Holy Week, beginning on Monday (a recap of Palm Sunday) and ending with Resurrection Day, families are invited to share one story from the book and follow it with suggested activities. Each day looks like this:






- Scripture Reading (Use your translation of choice)
- Reading a story from *Easter Love Letters from God*
- Conversation Starters
- Prayer (Use the one included here or invite a family member to pray)
- Bible Verse
- Family Activity



WHAT YOU NEED

- *Easter Love Letters from God*
- Bible
- Cardstock, to print the activity sheets (White works best for the coloring sheets)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Crayons or markers
- Paint & Brushes
- Hole Punch
- Binder Rings or Paper Fasteners

Before you begin your journey through Holy Week, print off the signed bookplate on paper and glue it inside the front cover of the book. Using cardstock, print a bookmark for each child and have them write their name on the back. Let them use it each day to mark where you are up to in the book.





Bookplate

Instructions: Print on paper and glue inside the cover of the book.



Easter Joy!
Glenns Nellis



Easter Joy!
Glenns Nellis





Bookmark



Print on cardstock one per child. Let them cut out and put their name on the back.



Easter Love Letters from God

Jesus came to heal us
from everything that
hurts us, and to fill our
lives with joy, hope,
forgiveness, and peace



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MONDAY: RIDE INTO JERUSALEM

1. Scripture Reading

Matthew 21: 1-11



2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read King of Kings, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

The love letter says: Jesus came to heal us from everything that hurts us, and to fill our lives with joy, hope, forgiveness and peace. The more you get to know Jesus, the more you'll discover that this can be your life too.

How can we get to know Jesus more?

How do you think we can fight hatred and sadness and unkindness with love?

Look at the picture of Jesus on p. 6 of the book. What do you think he's thinking?

4. Prayer

Dear God, thank you for Jesus. Thank you that he was brave enough to ride that donkey into Jerusalem, even though he could have turned around and gone back. Thank you that Jesus came to heal us. Thank you that he came to take away hate and sadness and unkindness by teaching us how to love. Amen.

5. Bible Verse

Print the activity sheet, God's Wonderful Words to You on cardstock. (One sheet per family member is best.) Cut out the verse for today. Punch a hole where indicated and attach to a binder ring or paper fastener. One verse will be added each day. See 'Fun Ways to Learn the Bible Verse' on the last page of this guide, if you wish to extend this activity.

6. Family Activity

Print the King of Kings picture on white cardstock for each family member to color. Open the book to p.5 of the book if children want to copy the colors.



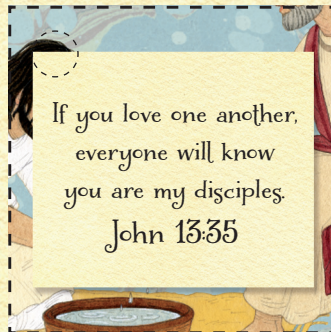
God's Wonderful Words to You



Print the activity sheet on cardstock. (One sheet per family member is best.) Cut out the verse for today. Punch a hole where indicated and attach to a binder ring or paper fastener. One verse will be added each day. See 'Fun Ways to Learn the Bible Verse' on the last page of this guide, if you wish to extend this activity.



I am the Lord who heals you.
Exodus 15:26



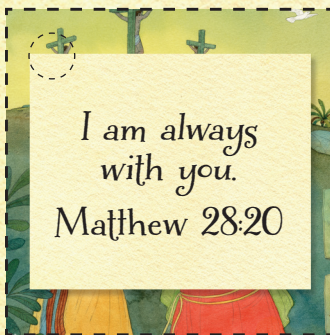
If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples.
John 13:35



I am the way.
John 14:6



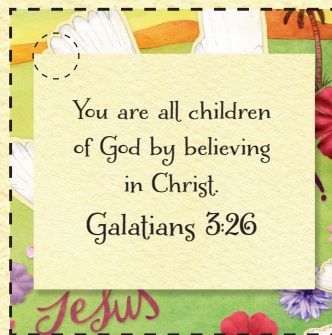
Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love.
Romans 8:39



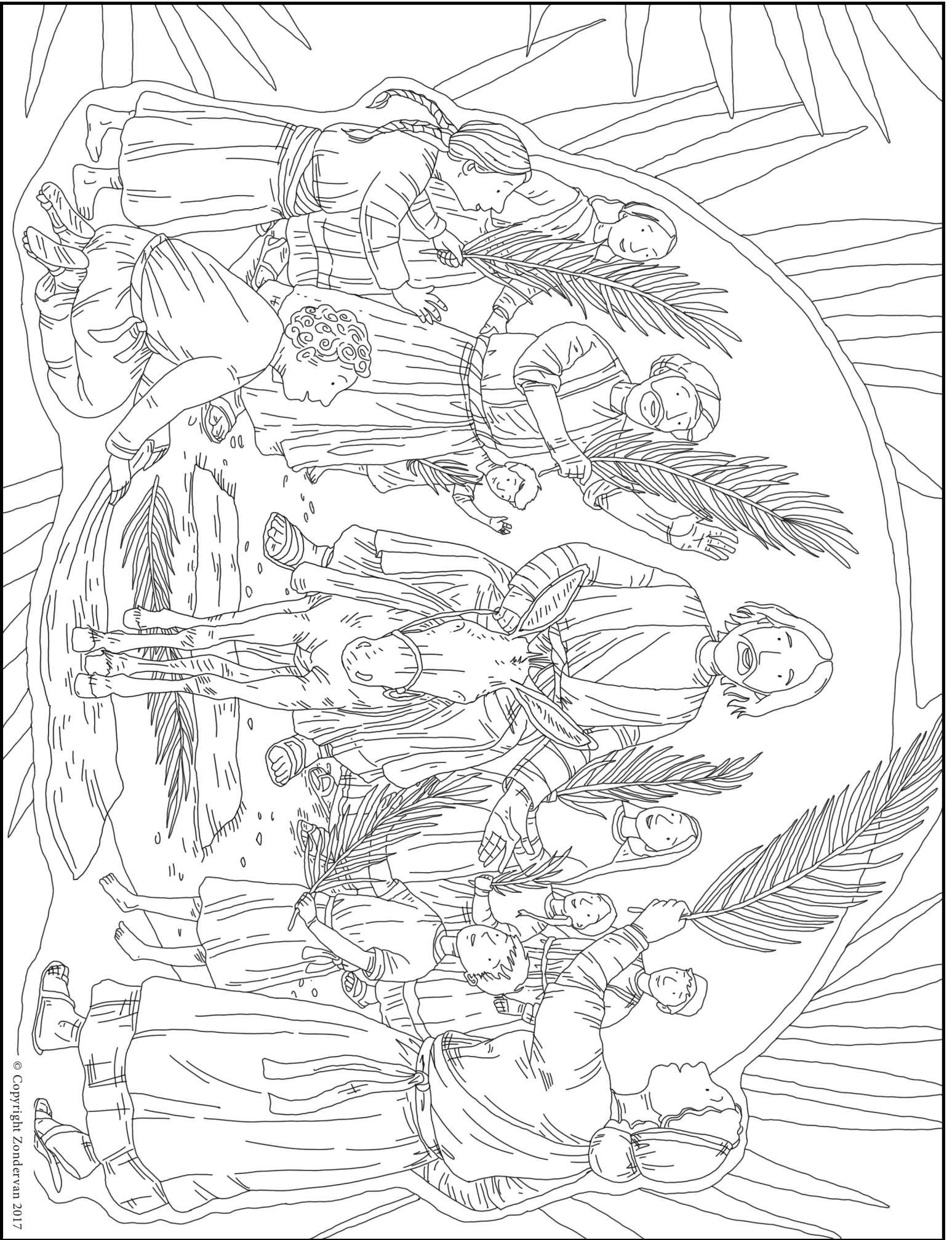
I am always with you.
Matthew 28:20



I am about to do something new.
Isaiah 43:19



You are all children of God by believing in Christ.
Galatians 3:26





TUESDAY: WASHING FEET

1. Scripture Reading

John 13:1-17



2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read What Love Looks Like, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

Look at the picture of Jesus on p.9. of the book. What do you think he's saying? How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus was washing their feet? Try to imagine that Jesus is washing your feet. What would you say to him?

4. Prayer

Dear God, it is so amazing that your Son would get down on his hands and knees and wash all those dirty feet. Thank you that when he did that, he showed us what love really looks like. Help us to try to love others, like Jesus did. Amen.

5. Bible Verse

Cut out God's Wonderful Words to You for this day and add to your ring binder or paper fastener.

6. Family Activity

As a family, ask this question together:

What can I do to show my parent, my sibling, my friend, my neighbor, or my teacher that I am a disciple?







Brainstorm several ideas of practical things each family member could do to show love to each of these people. Give everyone a sheet of 'Disciple Coupons'. Each person writes or draws their ideas on the coupons, and then gives them out to their family members/teacher/friend/neighbor.

Some ideas might be: Coupon Good For:

- Helping Clean Your Room (For sibling)
- A chore of your choice (For parent or teacher)
- Baking your favorite cookies (For neighbor)
- Helping with your homework (For friend)

Optional Family Activity

Participate in foot-washing as a family.












Disciple Coupons



Each person writes or draw their ideas on the coupons, and then gives them out to their family members/ teacher/ friend/ neighbor.

<p>DISCIPLE COUPON FOR </p> <p>_____</p> <p>GOOD FOR:</p> <p>REDEEMABLE WHENEVER YOU WANT. EXPIRATION DATE: NEVER!</p> <p>If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples. John 13:35</p>	<p>DISCIPLE COUPON FOR </p> <p>_____</p> <p>GOOD FOR:</p> <p>REDEEMABLE WHENEVER YOU WANT. EXPIRATION DATE: NEVER!</p> <p>If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples. John 13:35</p>	<p>DISCIPLE COUPON FOR </p> <p>_____</p> <p>GOOD FOR:</p> <p>REDEEMABLE WHENEVER YOU WANT. EXPIRATION DATE: NEVER!</p> <p>If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples. John 13:35</p>
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Thanks to Dema Kohen for permission

WEDNESDAY: LAST SUPPER

1. Scripture Reading

Luke 22:14-20 & John 13:1-6

2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read The Secret Supper, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

Look carefully at the pictures on p. 12-13 of the book. Which disciple do you think might be Judas Iscariot—the one who would tell Jesus' enemies where to find him? Why do you think that one might be Judas?

Look at the different expressions on the disciples' faces.

What do you think they are feeling?

Read the love letter again. What did you see in your mind?

4. Prayer

Dear God, it is so hard to imagine what heaven is like! But it must be a wonderful place! Thank you that Jesus has got heaven all ready for us. Amen.

5. Bible Verse

Cut out God's Wonderful Words to You for this day and add to your ring binder or paper fastener.

6. Family Activity

Look at the depiction of heaven on p. 15 of the book. Is this similar or different to what you saw when you closed your eyes? Use the activity sheet, 'Maybe Heaven is Like This' to draw or write or paint what you think heaven is like. Encourage children by asking:

What colors do you think of when you see heaven? What shapes? What words?

What kinds of rooms?



 Maybe Heaven is Like This...





THURSDAY: THE GLOOMY GARDEN

1. Scripture Reading

Mark 14: 32-42

2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read The Gloomy Garden, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

Look at the picture on p. 18. Can you spot Judas Iscariot? How is he feeling?
How does Jesus feel?

- What is the hardest thing you ever prayed about?
- How does it make you feel to know that God is always with you?

4. Prayer







Dear God, thank you that you were with Jesus on the night he was arrested. Thank you that you are always with us, no matter how we're feeling. Amen.

5. Bible Verse

Cut out God's Wonderful Words to You for this day and add to your ring binder or paper fastener.

6. Family Activity

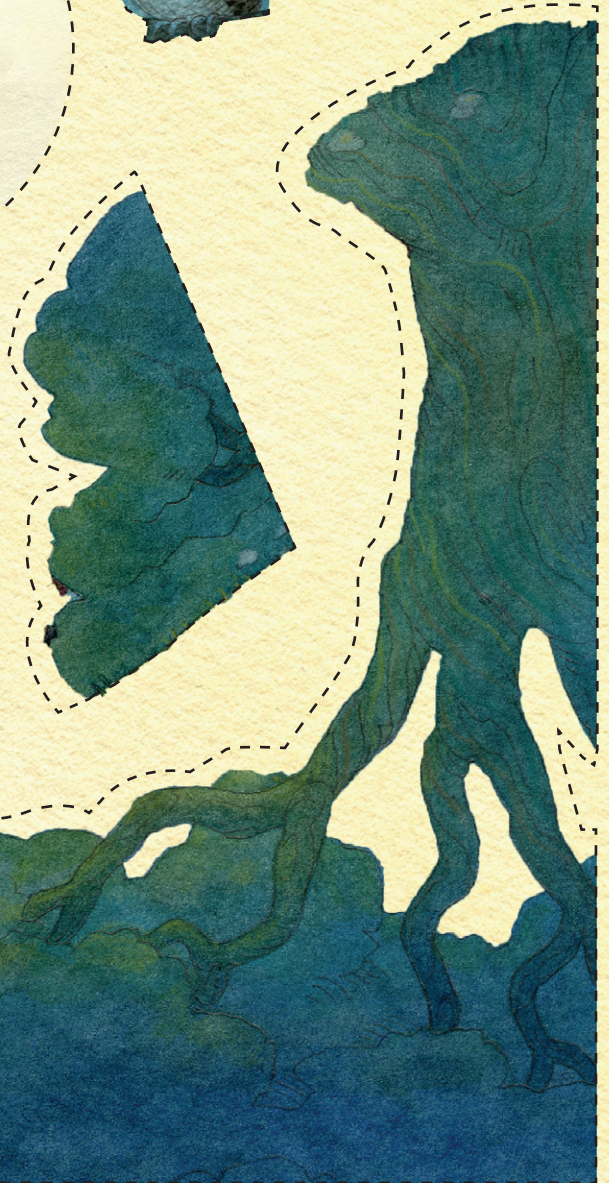
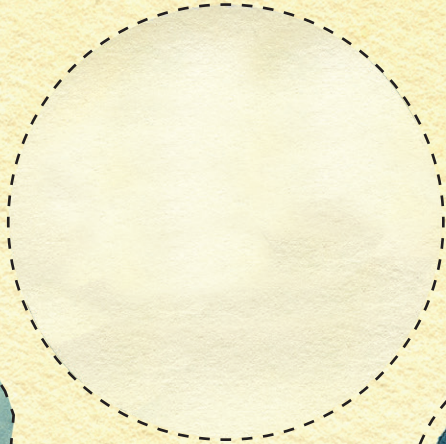
Create your own Garden of Gethsemane scene using the cut outs provided.





Garden of Gethsemane.

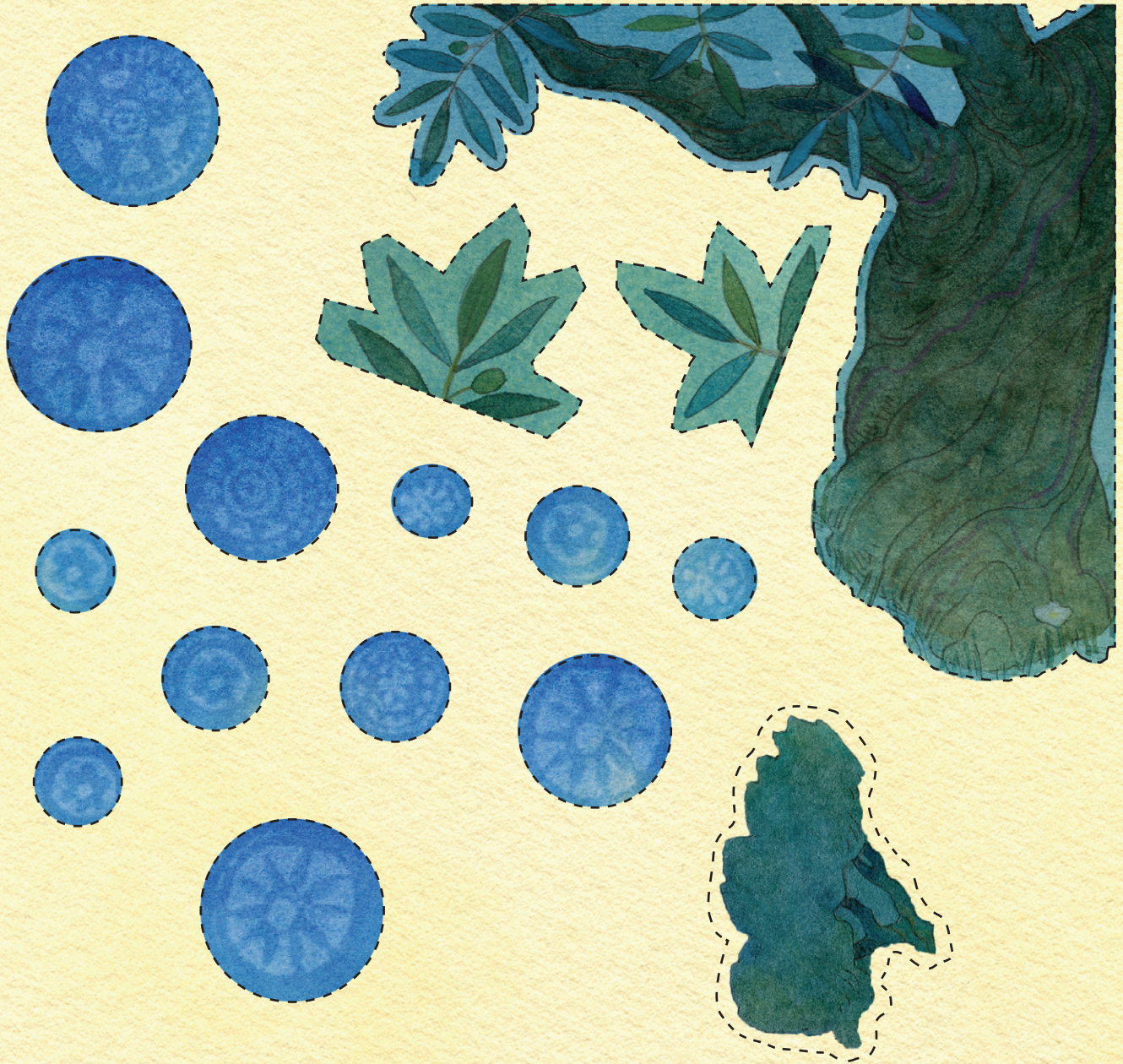
Cut out the templates below and glue onto the next page to create your own Garden of Gethsemane scene.





Garden of Gethsemane.

Cut out the templates below and glue onto the next page to create your own Garden of Gethsemane scene.







GOOD FRIDAY: THE DARKEST DAY

1. Scripture Reading

Matthew 27:45-54



2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read *The Darkest Day*, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

Look at the picture of the two soldiers on p. 21 of the book.

What are they doing? Now turn the page. What are they doing now?

When Jesus died, the rocks shattered. Find all the rocks broken apart. Why do you think that happened?

What do you think of the colors the artist used on p. 22 of the book?

4. Prayer







Dear God, even though Jesus died and it was so sad, we know that this was not the end of the story. We know that Jesus would come back to life! Thank you so much for that amazing miracle, and for that happy ending. Amen.

5. Bible Verse

Cut out God's Wonderful Words to You for this day and add to your ring binder or paper fastener.

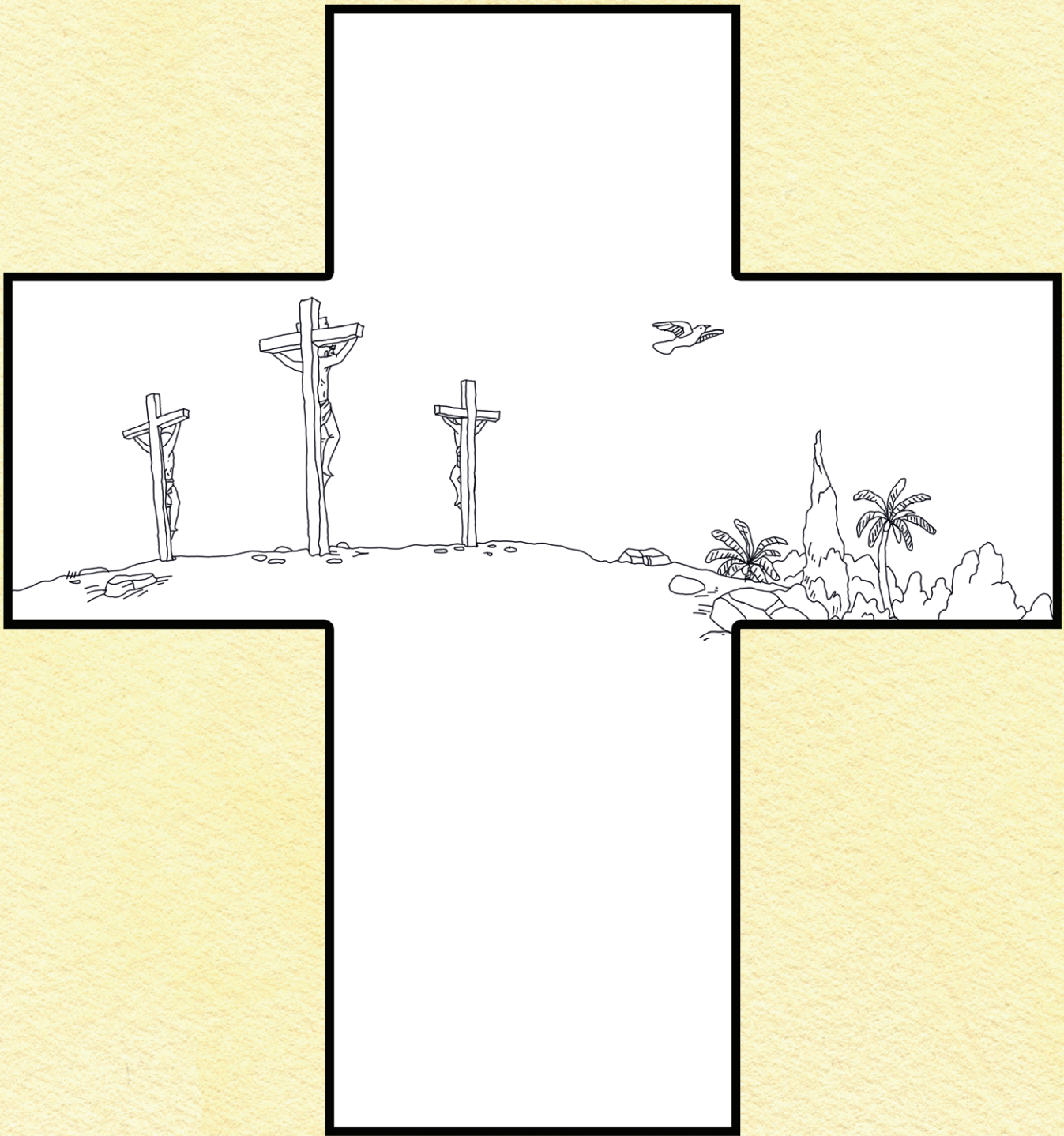
6. Family Activity

Print the 'Good Friday Cross' activity sheet on white cardstock, one per family member. Follow the instructions.



Good Friday Cross

Use paint, crayons or markers to color the cross. Try to use similar colors to those found on p.22 of the book. Then cut the cross out. (Be sure to save it... you'll be turning it over and using it on Sunday!)





SATURDAY: THE QUIET CAVE

1. Scripture Reading

John 19: 38-42



2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read The Quiet Cave, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

Look carefully at the pictures on p. 24-25 of the book.

How do they make you feel?

Turn the page. What signs of new life do you see?

How do you think a caterpillar feels when it wakes up and has become a butterfly?

How do you think Jesus might have felt when he came back to life?

4. Prayer







Dear God, thank you for surprises, and new life, and the amazing thing you were doing inside that quiet cave. Amen.

5. Bible Verse

Cut out God's Wonderful Words to You for Saturday and add to your ring binder or paper fastener.

6. Family Activity: Beautiful Butterflies!

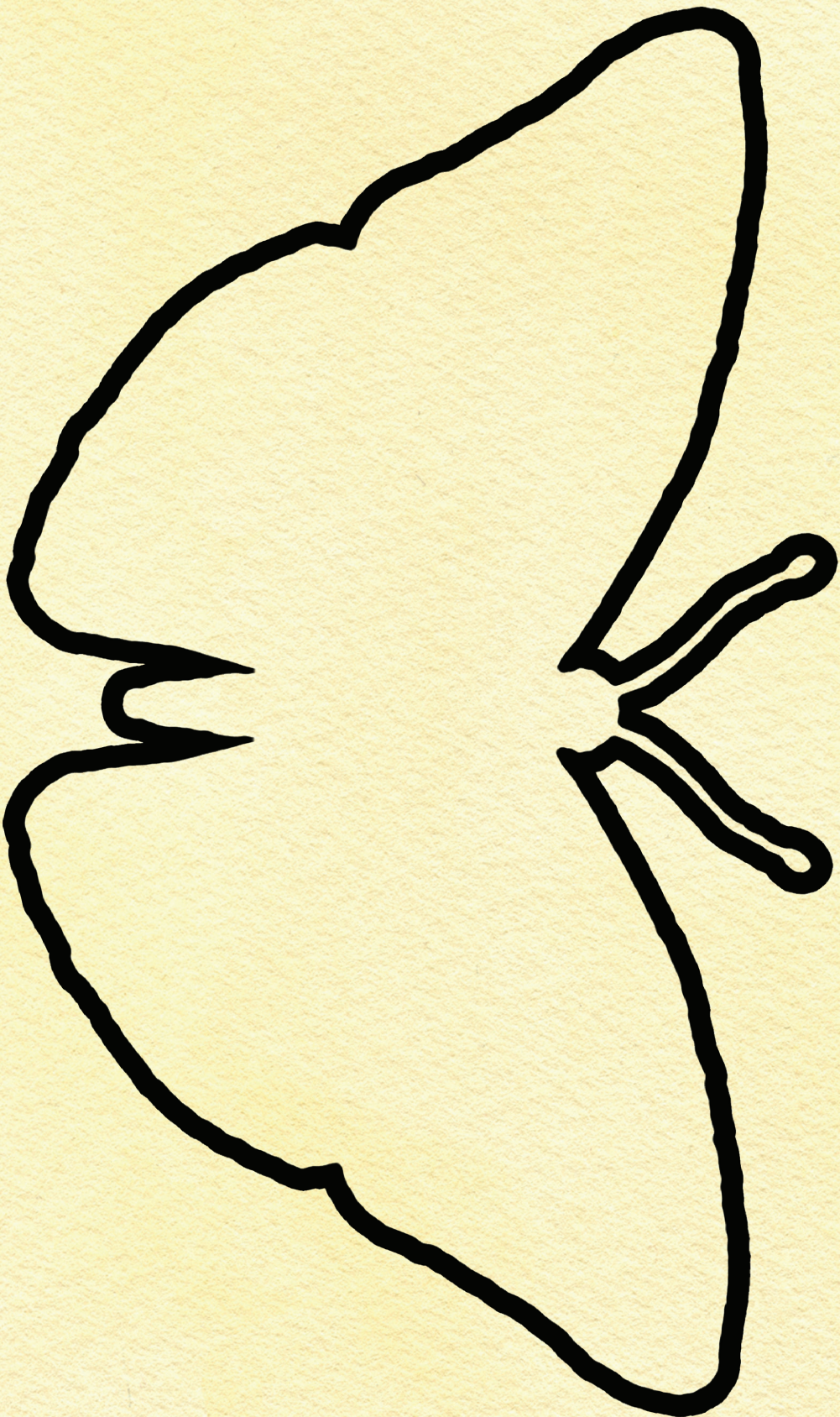
Use the 'Beautiful Butterfly' template to create butterflies.





Beautiful Butterflies!

Put blobs of paint on one side of the butterfly only. Carefully fold down the center, smooth over the paint and peel open. When dry, cut them out and make your own beautiful butterfly display. Challenge: Can you make a butterfly like the one on p. 27?



SUNDAY: THE SUPER SURPRISE



1. Scripture Reading

Mark 16:1-7

2. Easter Love Letters from God Story

Read The Super Surprise, including the love letter and God's Wonderful Words to You.

3. Conversation Starters

Look at the pictures and colors on p. 28 & 29. How do they make you feel?

Look at the picture of Mary Magdalene running to Jesus on p. 31.

What do you think she might be saying?

Look at the different titles for Jesus in the love letter. Which one do you like best and why?

4. Prayer

Say the prayer together that is contained in the love letter, or have an adult say it one phrase at a time while children repeat.

5. Bible Verse

Cut out God's Wonderful Words to You for Sunday and add to your ring binder or paper fastener. Now that you have all 7 verses, talk about which one you like most and why.

6. Family Activity: Transforming the Cross

Print out the 'Transforming the Cross' activity sheet on cardstock. Take the cross that you made on Good Friday, turn it over and cover it with the flowers. Now your cross is transformed from a cross of despair to a cross of hope.

You'll also find an extra Easter coloring sheet included for this day.

Closing Activity

Use the 'My Love Letter to God' template to write to God. Once your letter is written, seal it in an envelope, place it in the back of your Bible, and write on the front 'My Love Letter to God, To Be Opened on Easter Sunday.' Don't open it until next year.

For ideas of what to write:

Look back through the book and talk about your favorite story.

Look back through the daily Bible verses and talk about your favorite one.

What was the best part of Easter for you this year?

Where did you see God this Easter?

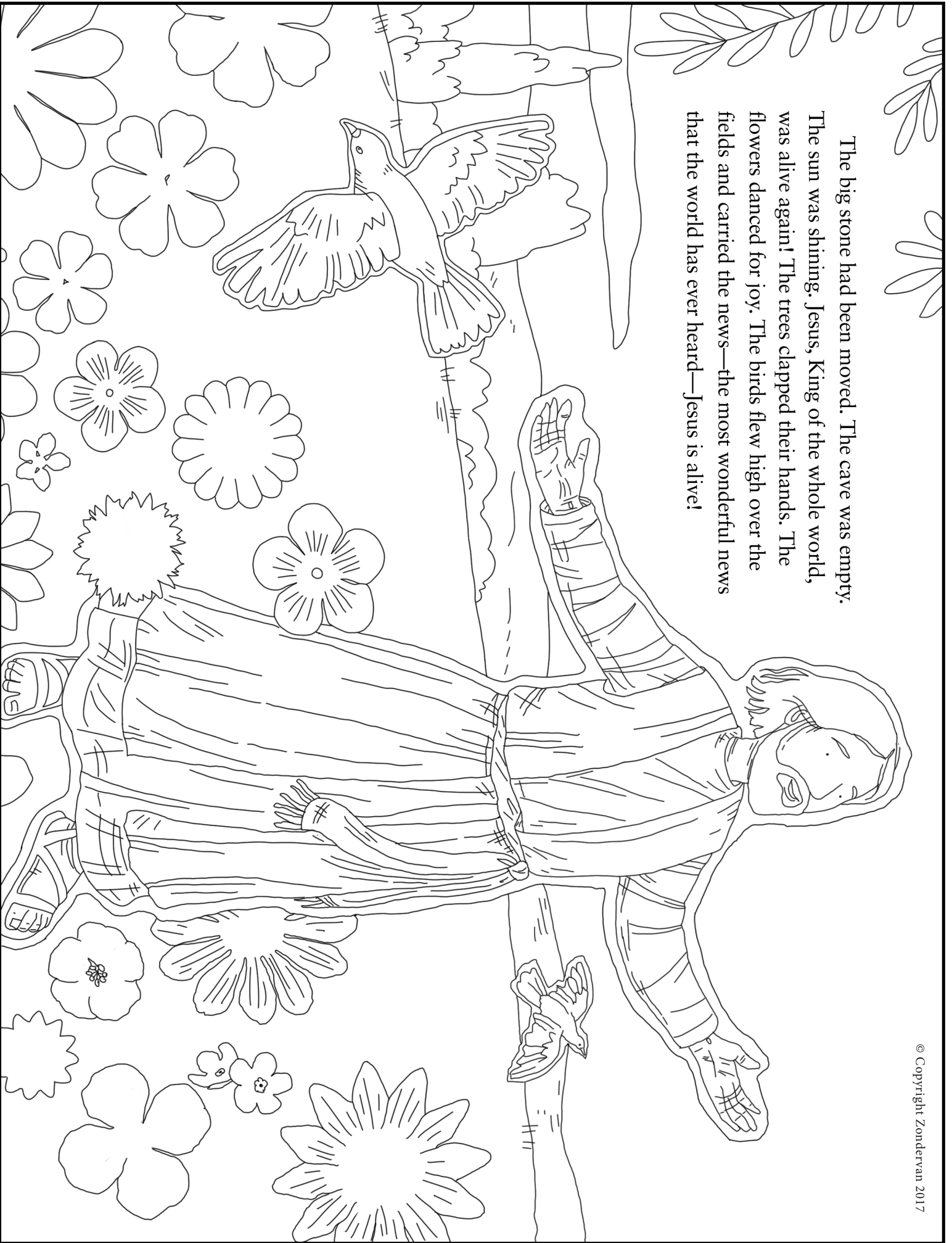


Transforming the Cross

Cut out the flowers below and glue them on the other side of the cross you made on Good Friday.



The big stone had been moved. The cave was empty. The sun was shining. Jesus, King of the whole world, was alive again! The trees clapped their hands. The flowers danced for joy. The birds flew high over the fields and carried the news—the most wonderful news that the world has ever heard—Jesus is alive!





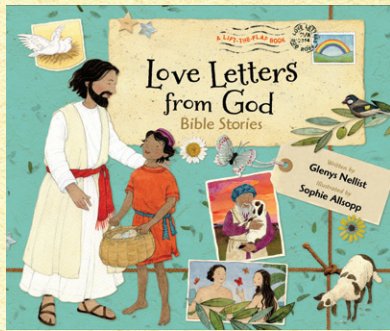
Fun Ways to Learn the Bible Verse

1. Whisper the verse together, then repeat it, getting louder & louder. Now repeat it again, returning to a whisper.
2. Use a puppet, who really wants to learn the verse, but forgets different words each time. Children will be eager to 'teach' it.
3. Play 'Bible Bible Verse' (a version of Duck, Duck, Goose). Sit in a circle. Choose one child to walk around the outside of the group while everyone repeats the verse together. On every word, the person gently touches each head. Whoever they land on for the last word chases them around the circle back to their place. Continue with the new person.
4. Make up or use known sign language for each word.
5. Children say first word, adult says next. Then swap over.
6. Play 'Sparkle'. Go around the group, each saying one word of verse including chapter & verse reference. After the last one has spoken, the next person says 'Sparkle' and then the next one is out. Continue until you have a winner.
7. Make cards with each word on, jumble up and rearrange.
8. Attach the cards to your clothing. Kids & adults line up in correct order.
9. Use a whiteboard. Write the verse. Erase one word as kids close their eyes. Take turns to fill in the missing words.
10. For verses that have 2 distinct phrases, play 'Marco Polo': One child stands in middle of group, blindfold, and says the first phrase. Others respond with 2nd phrase. The one blindfolded must 'find' another child. Continue until someone is caught & then that person goes in the middle.

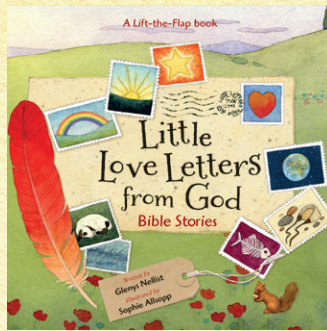


The Love Letters from God series from Glenys Nellist

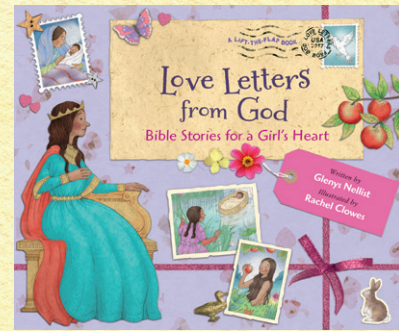
Available wherever books are sold



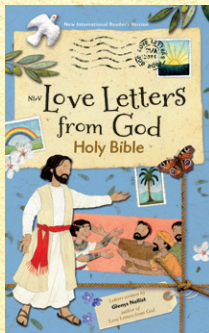
Love Letters from God: Bible Stories
\$16.99



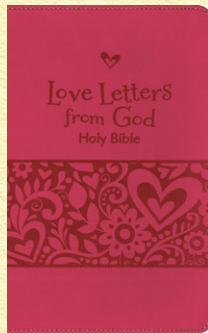
Little Love Letters from God:
Bible Stories Board Book
\$9.99



Love Letters from God: Bible Stories
for a Girl's Heart Hardcover
\$16.99



NIV Love Letters from God
Holy Bible Hardcover
\$27.99



Imitation Leather, Magenta
\$34.99



Christmas Love Letters from God:
Bible Stories Hardcover
\$16.99



Glenys Nellist was born and raised in a little village in northern England. Her stories and poems have been published in children's magazines where her writing reflects a deep passion for bringing the Bible to life for young children. Glenys lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan, with her husband, David.