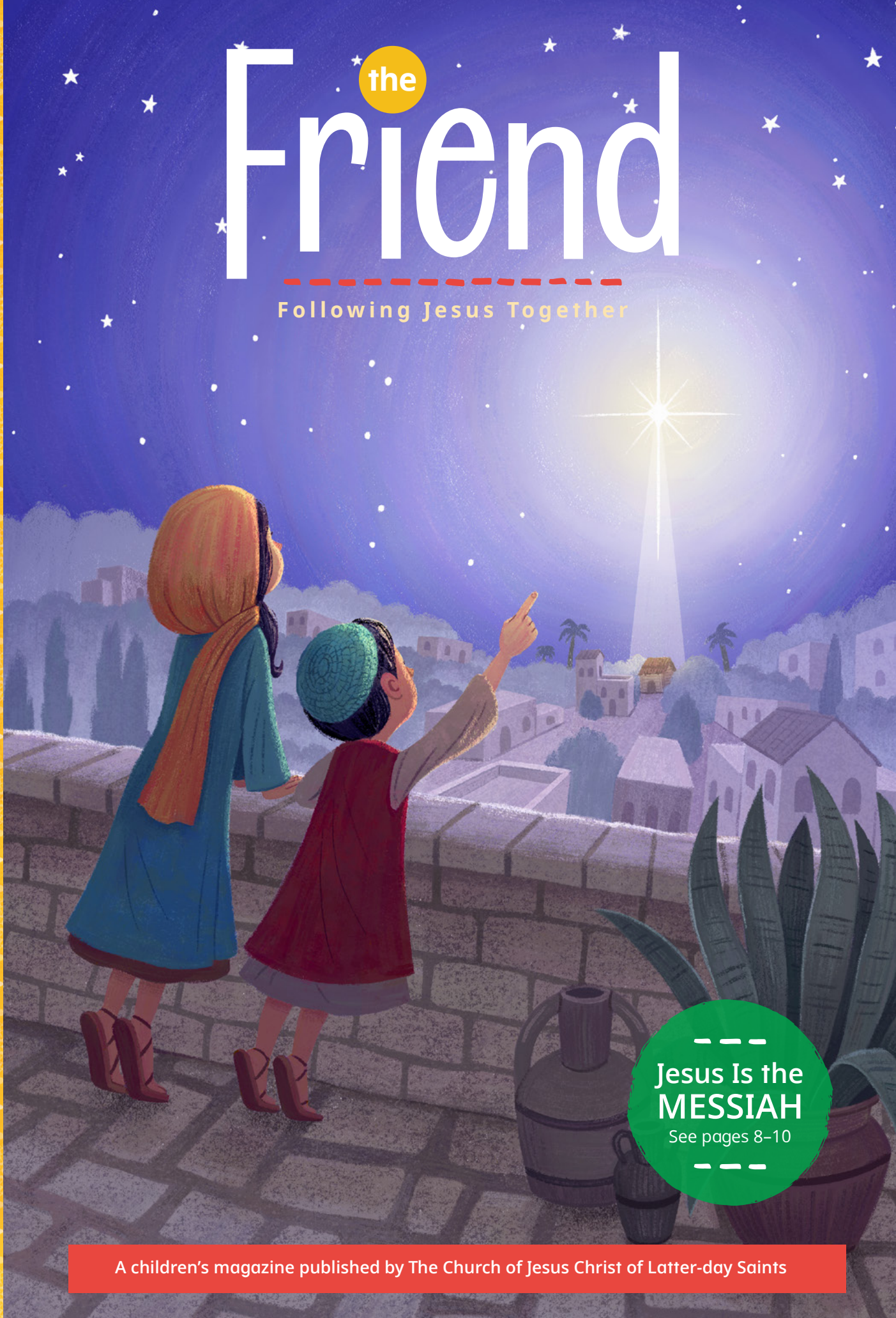


DECEMBER 2022

the Friend

Following Jesus Together



Jesus Is the
MESSIAH

See pages 8-10

A children's magazine published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



Dear Friends,

Do you love to look at lights at Christmas? You might see lights on a Christmas tree or Nativity display. But the brightest light in the world is the Light of Jesus Christ. You can feel His light when you learn about Him, sing a song about Him, or think about what He would do. On page 2 you can read what President Nelson said about sharing the Savior's light. And on page 3 you can accept his invitation to share it this Christmas. Then the world will be even brighter!

With love,
The *Friend*

P.S. Write to tell us how you feel the Light of Jesus Christ.

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CONTENTS

Come, Follow Me 6-12

Messages from Our Leaders..... 2, 26, 30

Stories 4, 14, 22

Helping Hands 18-20

For Older Kids..... 33-40

For Little Friends..... 41-49

Activities 16, 17, 27, 31

Find 3 Hidden English CTR Rings

Hard: Have you ridden a camel?

Harder: Rings aren't heavy.

Hardest: Christmas is a great time to serve.



Front cover by Shawna J. C. Tenney

Friends by Mail

Where I Read the *Friend*



Tom F., age 9, reads the *Friend* in French in Quebec, Canada.

When Jesus Was Born



We read the story of Jesus's birth and used the cutouts (Dec. 2021). It helped me understand the importance of His birth.

Gemma R., age 7, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

I Love to See the Temple



Shirley N., age 4, visited the Tegucigalpa Honduras Temple.

Sharing the Light of Jesus Christ



By President
Russell M. Nelson



Jesus Christ was born to bring light and joy to all who follow Him. Christmas is a special time to feel and share the Light of Jesus Christ. You can do this by showing love to others, including:

**Those who are
lonely.**



**Those who are tired
or discouraged.**



**Those who are
afraid.**

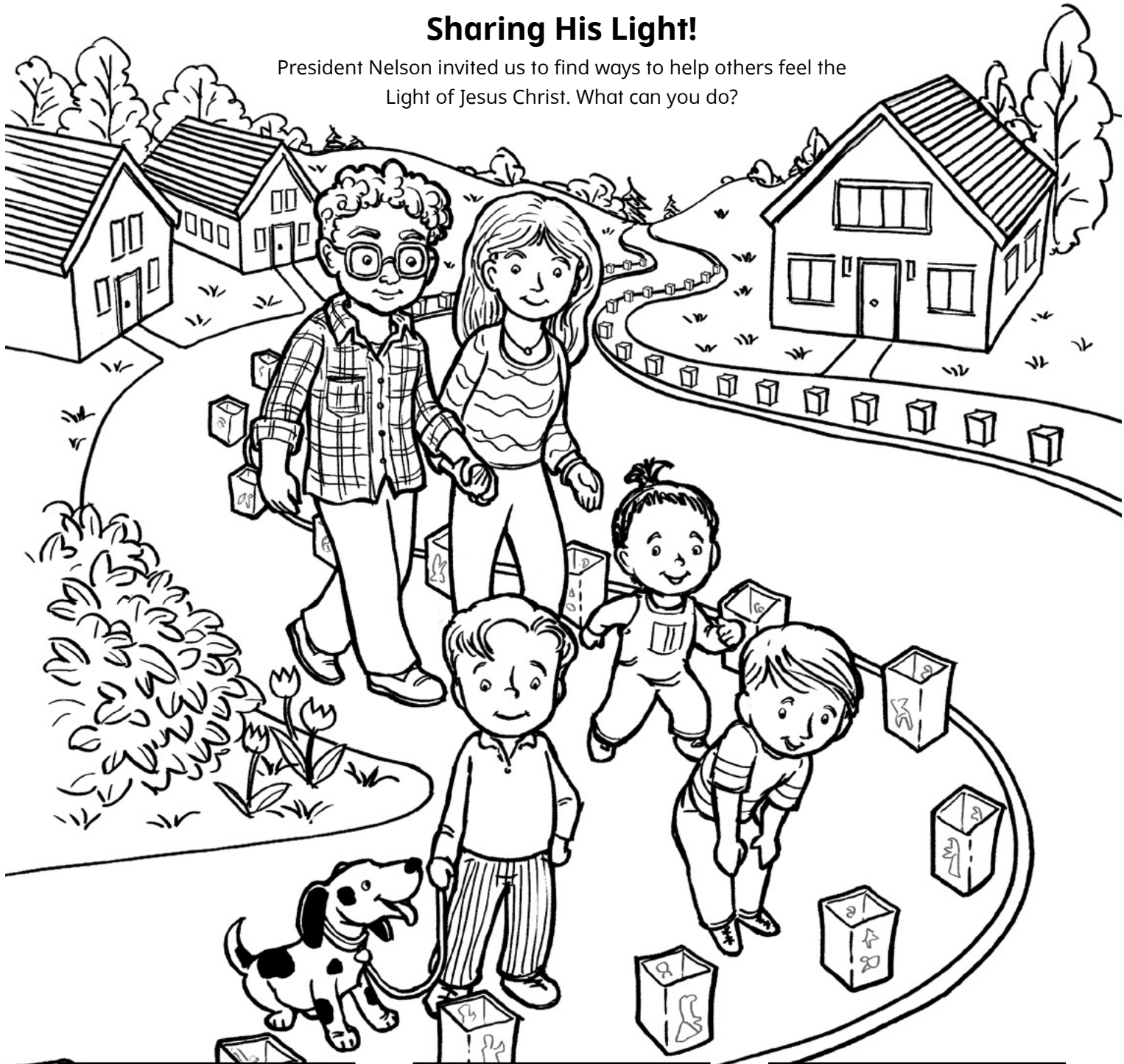


I invite you to think of ways you can reach out and help others feel the Light of Jesus Christ. I wish you, my beloved friends, a very merry Christmas. May you find joy in helping others see and feel the Light of Jesus Christ. ●

Adapted from "The Light of Christmas: A Message from President Russell M. Nelson" (video), ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Sharing His Light!

President Nelson invited us to find ways to help others feel the Light of Jesus Christ. What can you do?



I feel Jesus Christ's light when ...

I can share His light with ...

I can share His light by ...

The Nativity Star

By Juliann Tenney Doman
(Based on a true story)

It was Christmas Eve. That meant it was time for the family Nativity play! Acting out the story of Jesus Christ's birth was one of Cayden's favorite Christmas traditions.

Dad got out the box of costumes. "Who do you want to be this year?" he asked Cayden's younger brother and sister.

"I'll be Joseph!" Grant said. He reached into the box and pulled out costumes.

"May I be Mary?" asked Hannah. Mom nodded and handed her a doll. Hannah carefully wrapped the doll in a blanket and put it in a little box like a manger.

Cayden smiled. Hannah wanted to play the part of Mary every year.

"I'll be a shepherd," said Brynne, Cayden's older sister. She grabbed a stuffed animal. "And this will be my sheep."

"Mom would be a beautiful angel," Dad said.

What part could Cayden play in the Nativity?





Mom smiled. "See how wise Dad is? He would make a great Wise Man."

"Someone strong needs to be the donkey." Cayden's oldest brother, Scott, flexed his muscles. "I guess that's me."

"What about you, Cayden?" Dad asked. "What part do you want to play?"

Cayden was quiet. Then he had an idea.

He ran to get the yellow blanket off his bed. He held it up for Dad to see. "It's a part we haven't had before. I want to be the star. The one that shows the way to Jesus."

"That's a great idea," Dad said.

They all put their costumes on. Cayden wrapped the yellow blanket

around his shoulders. Then Dad read the story from the scriptures.

Cayden smiled as Scott got on his hands and knees to be the donkey. Dad set Hannah on his back to be Mary. Grant, who was Joseph, tried to steady her as they walked across the room. Cayden listened closely. He knew his part was coming.

"And behold, there shall a new star arise," Dad read.*

Cayden stood tall with his arms stretched out wide. He thought about the star that shone over Bethlehem. He wanted to help people find Jesus, just like the star did on that first Christmas night. ●

This story took place in the USA.

* From Helaman 14:5



COME, FOLLOW ME ACTIVITIES

For home evening, scripture study, or just for fun!

Seeking Jesus

**FOR NAHUM; HABAKKUK;
AND ZEPHANIAH**

STORY: The prophet Zephaniah taught, “Seek ye the Lord” (Zephaniah 2:3). We can seek Jesus Christ like the Wise Men who followed the star. We can learn about Him and serve others. We can help others seek Jesus too!

SONG: “Seek the Lord Early” (*Children’s Songbook*, 108)

ACTIVITY: Read the story on page 4. Then turn to page 38 and learn how to make an origami star. As you fold your star, talk about how you can help others seek Jesus.

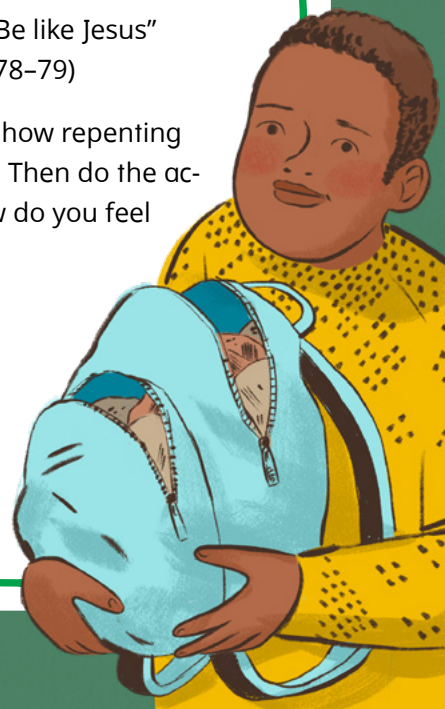
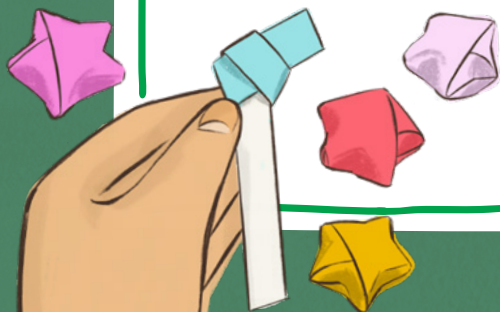
Repentance Rocks

FOR HAGGAI; ZECHARIAH 1-3; 7-14

STORY: In a vision, Zechariah saw a man wearing dirty clothes. An angel came to the man and gave him clean clothes. (See Zechariah 3:3-5.) Putting on clean clothes can remind us of repenting. When we make a wrong choice, we can repent and be clean again.

SONG: “I’m Trying to Be like Jesus” (*Children’s Songbook*, 78-79)

ACTIVITY: Talk about how repenting can lighten your load. Then do the activity on page 12. How do you feel when you repent?



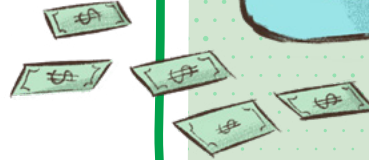
Tithing Blessings

FOR MALACHI

STORY: Heavenly Father promises that when we pay tithing, He will “open . . . the windows of heaven” to bless us (Malachi 3:10).

SONG: “I Want to Give the Lord My Tenth” (*Children’s Songbook*, 150)

ACTIVITY: Read the story on page 22 about why we pay tithing. Then do the activity on page 17 together.



Celebrating the Savior

FOR CHRISTMAS

STORY: Jesus is called by many names in the scriptures. You can read about these names on page 8 and page 26.

SONG: “Away in a Manager” (*Children’s Songbook*, 42–43)

ACTIVITY: Do the Christmas program on page 24 to learn about how Christmas symbols can remind us of Jesus Christ. Turn to page 38 for more ideas to celebrate Jesus.



FOR LITTLE FRIENDS

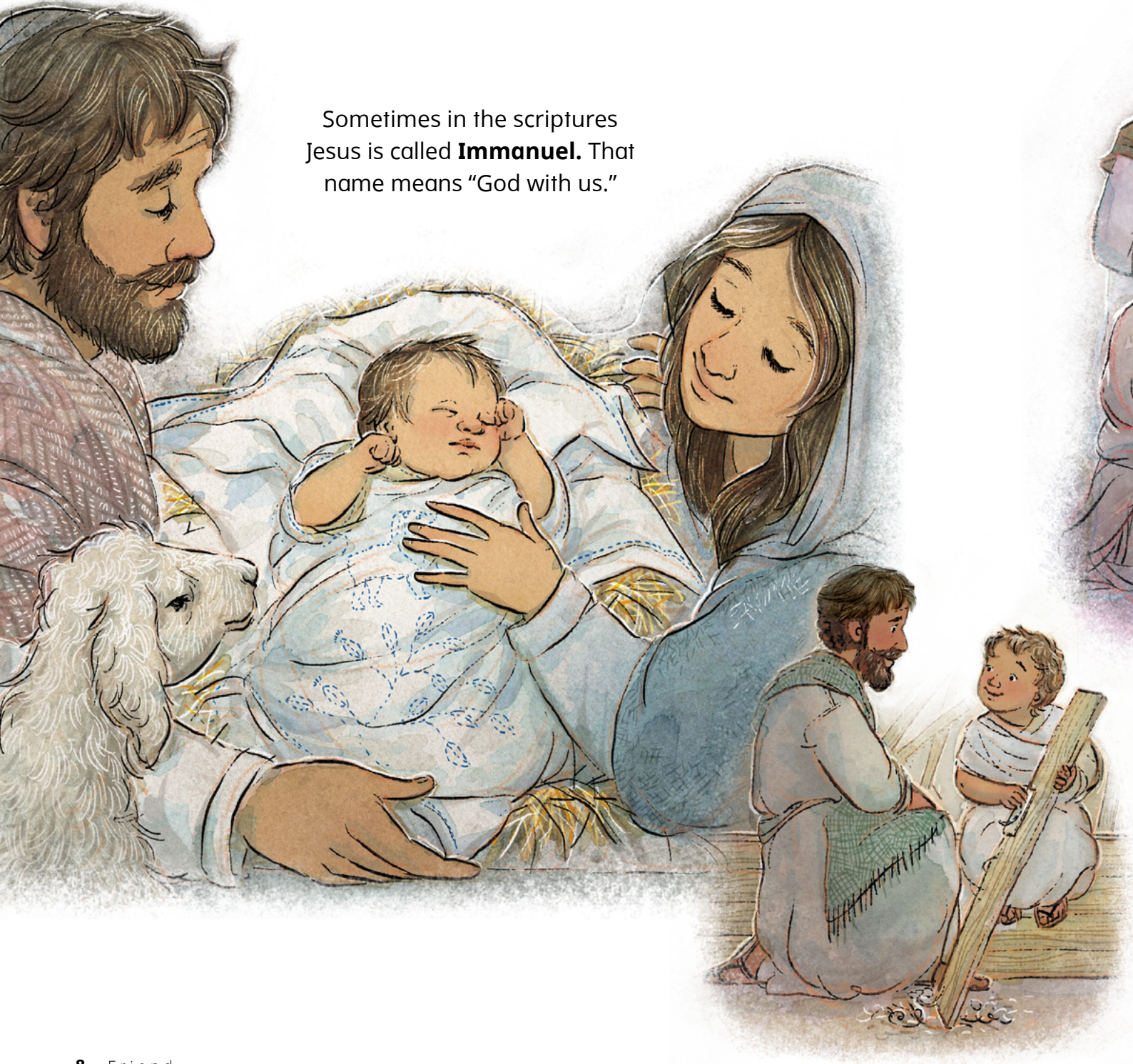
- Read the story on page 4. Then sing “I Am like a Star” (*Children’s Songbook*, 163).
- Read the scripture story on page 8. Then color the picture on page 48.
- Read the Nativity story on page 44. Then do the maze on page 43.



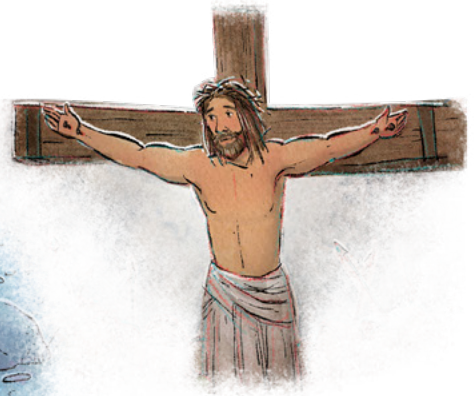
The Many Names of Jesus

Many prophets taught about Jesus Christ. They said He would be born to show us how to live. They used many names to teach about Him.

Sometimes in the scriptures Jesus is called **Immanuel**. That name means "God with us."



Jesus is also called the **Messiah**. *Messiah* means "the anointed one." Jesus died for us so we can live with God again.



Jesus is our **Savior**. He saves us from our sins and death.



Another name for Jesus is the **Prince of Peace**. When we are scared or upset, He can help us feel peace through the Holy Ghost.



I love Jesus Christ. I can learn about His life and love in the scriptures. ●

You can read more about Jesus's names in Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 43:3; and 2 Nephi 2:6.



Cut out the cards, fold on the dotted line, and tape them closed.

DANIEL

“He believed in his God.”

- He refused to eat food that was against the commandments.
- He helped the king understand a dream. Part of it meant that everyone would hear the gospel.
- He was thrown into the lions’ den because he prayed to God. But God saved him!

(Daniel 6:23)

“[God] delivered his servants that trusted in him.”

- They were friends of Daniel’s.
- The king told them to pray to a statue. But they prayed only to God.
- The king threw them into a fire. But the fire didn’t hurt them! A heavenly being protected them.

(Daniel 3:28)

SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABED-NEGO



Lighten Your Load

Sin is when we choose to not follow God's commandments. It can feel like a heavy load. When we repent and follow Jesus Christ, He takes the burden of our sin away.

1. Find a bag or a backpack and some heavy items, like rocks or cans of food.
2. Cut out the labels below. Attach each one to a can or rock.
3. Read each label, then put the can or rock into the bag. Pass the bag around so everyone can feel its weight.



4. Take turns removing an object from the bag. When it's your turn, say what someone could do to repent or follow Jesus. (You can look at the list below for some ideas!)
5. When the bag is empty, pass it around again so everyone can feel how light it is. How do you feel when you repent?

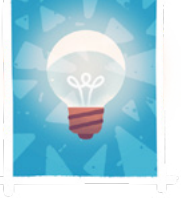
When you repent, you:

- Understand that you made a wrong choice.
- Solve the problem the best you can (ask a parent for help if you need to).
- Say you're sorry.
- Pray and ask Heavenly Father to forgive you.
- Try to not do it again. Ask for Heavenly Father's help!



Hurt someone	Told a lie
Called someone a mean name	Disobeyed your parents
Took something that isn't yours	Said a bad word

BRIGHT IDEA



Share the gift of the *Friend* this Christmas!



Visit store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Cookies, Hugs, and Love

By María Marta Molina de Monterroso
(Based on a true story)

Eva stood on her toes. She reached for the box in the cupboard.

“Got it!” she said.

She opened the box. Inside were small Nativity figures made of red clay. She took them out and placed the baby Jesus gently in the manger.

Then it was time to decorate the Christmas tree. Eva helped Mamá and her little brother, Nefi, hang strings of lights and *manzanillas*.

Eva loved the sweet smell of the tiny yellow fruits. When Papá came home, he helped Eva and Nefi put the star on top of the tree.

Eva was glad some of their Christmas tradition were the same this year. Everything else felt so different.

A few weeks ago, a hurricane hit their city in Guatemala. The heavy rain and winds destroyed many houses. Some people were still living in shelters. And many people were sick because of the COVID-19 virus.

Usually on Christmas Eve, Eva’s aunts, uncles, and cousins came over for a big party. Eva and Nefi got to stay up late. They made *ponche* (punch) with their aunts and played with their cousins. At midnight, everyone went out into the streets, lit firecrackers, and gave hugs to friends and neighbors.

But this year, their family members couldn’t come to visit. And there would be no Christmas Eve hugs in the streets.

*“Christmas won’t be the same this year,”
Eva said.*



Eva felt sad about all the fun she would miss. "Christmas won't be the same this year," she said.

Papá nodded. "It is different. But Mamá and I have an idea that might cheer you up."

"Christmas is about giving," Mamá said. "Would you like to help us buy food for the families who lost their homes in the hurricane?"

"OK!" Eva said. Nefi nodded.

Eva and Nefi went with Mamá to the store. Eva helped put the food in grocery bags. Then she had an idea!

"Mamá," she said, "can you help Nefi and me bake cookies for the kids in the shelter? We can deliver them when we bring the groceries!"

Mamá agreed. Eva, Nefi, and Mamá spent several days baking cookies together. Eva and Nefi put the cookies into little plastic bags and tied them with ribbons. Then they put on their masks and walked with Mamá and Papá to the shelter where the families

were staying.

"There are lots of kids here," Nefi said. "Will we have enough cookies?"

"I hope so. Let's say a prayer," said Eva. They closed their eyes. Eva quietly prayed, "Heavenly Father, please help us so that everyone here can feel Thy love."

The children in the shelter stood in a long line. Eva and Nefi gave each child a package of cookies. There were enough for everyone!

As they walked home, Eva didn't feel sad anymore. She had a big smile on her face. She hadn't been able to give hugs to her friends on Christmas Eve. But each package of cookies was like a hug from her heart. ●

This story took place in Guatemala.

Turn to page 38 for a cookie recipe from Guatemala!



Eva and Nefi speak a language called Q'eqchi'. They're excited that a new temple is being built in Cobán, near their home!



Family Treasure Hunt

Here's a gold medal for saving so many family treasures this year!



Cut out the medal and add it to your treasure box.

This Month's Challenge

Keep your treasures safe so you and your family can remember them.

Take pictures of each treasure. Then upload them to [FamilySearch.org/memories](https://www.familysearch.org/memories).



Make a video of yourself showing the treasures and talking about them.

Tithing Time

Heavenly Father asks us to pay tithing. Tithing is 10 percent of the money we receive.

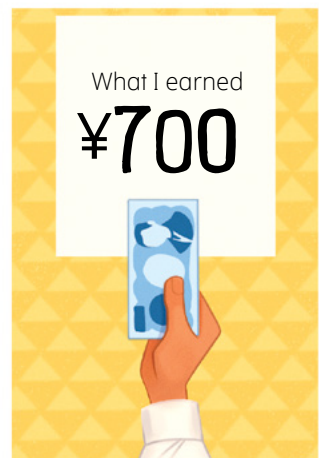
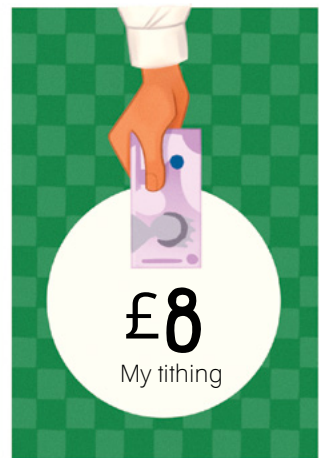
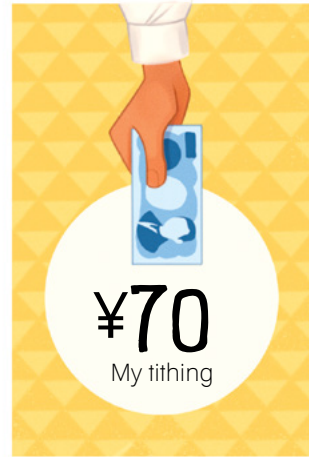
Match each amount of money with the tithing you would pay. You can also cut the cards out and play a matching game.

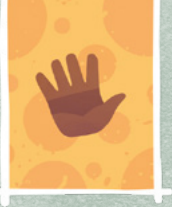
TIP:

To find 10 percent of these numbers, take a zero off the end. So 10 percent of 100 is 10.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALYSSA TALLENT





MEET JUN EUI

from Hong Kong

Meet Primary children helping others, like Jesus did.

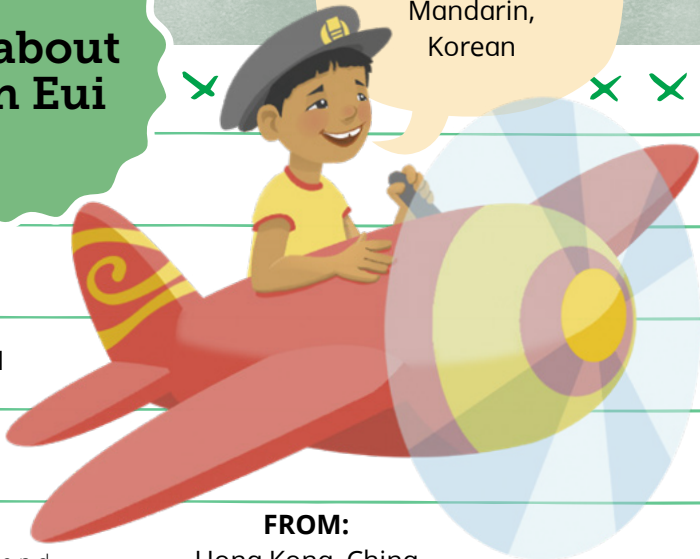


LANGUAGES:

English,
Cantonese,
Mandarin,
Korean

**All about
Jun Eui**

AGE: 11



GOALS AND DREAMS:
To be a pilot



FAMILY:

Jun Eui, Father, Mother,
three younger sisters

Jun Eui's Helping Hands

Jun Eui lives in a huge city full of skyscrapers. But for Jun Eui, the most important place in Hong Kong is his family's home. When others need help, he is patient and tries to help them. He helps his sisters with their homework. He helps his mother with chores. He vacuums, mops, washes dishes, folds clothes, and cleans bedrooms. "When I help my family and when I help other people, I feel happy, and I feel the Holy Ghost," Jun Eui says. ●



Jun Eui follows Jesus by patiently helping others. Turn the page to read a story about how Jesus was patient.

Jun Eui's Favorites



PLACE:

Home and Grandma's house in South Korea



STORY ABOUT JESUS:

When He helped Moses part the Red Sea



PRIMARY SONG:

"Scripture Power"
(ChurchofJesusChrist.org)



FOOD:

Spaghetti with white cream sauce



COLOR:

Green

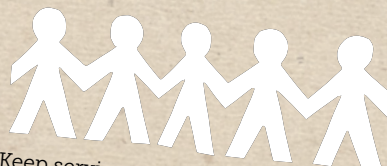


SUBJECTS IN

SCHOOL:

Mathematics,
English

Thanks for Being Part of the
Helping Hands Team!



Keep serving others and following Jesus.
You can do so much good!



Jesus Was Patient

One night a man named Nicodemus talked to Jesus. Nicodemus had some questions. Jesus was patient while he asked his questions. When Nicodemus didn't understand, Jesus explained again. ●

You can read this story in John 3:1-21.

I CAN BE PATIENT WITH OTHERS

- Who can you be more patient with?

- Say a prayer and make a plan to help them.

- Do your plan!



I work hard to be a good friend and be kind to everybody, especially those that seem lonely or are being treated differently just because they look or act a little different. I want them to know that they are loved and that they have a friend in me who cares for and respects them.

Destiny H., age 12, Florida, USA

How are you trying to help others, like Jesus did? Write and tell us.





HELLO FROM Hong Kong!

Hong Kong is a city and region of China. About 7.5 million people live there.



Join Margo and Paolo as they travel the world to learn about Heavenly Father's children.



LANGUAGE

Most people here speak a Chinese language called Cantonese. In Cantonese, a word's meaning depends on tone—how high or low the sounds are.



CHURCH MEMBERS

People of many faiths live in Hong Kong. That includes about 25,000 members of the Church. These kids are practicing for a Primary program.

CITY LIFE

Hong Kong is a big, busy city with lots of people and tall buildings. It has more than 500 skyscrapers—more than any city in the world!



HONG KONG CHINA TEMPLE

This temple has six levels. It was built to be tall instead of wide because there is little space in the city.

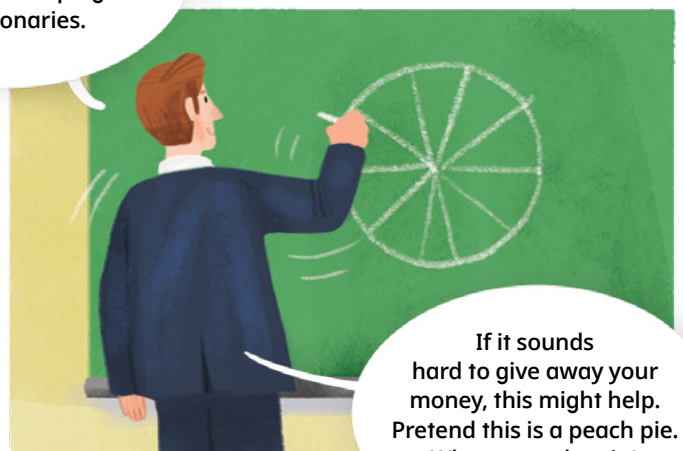
DIM SUM

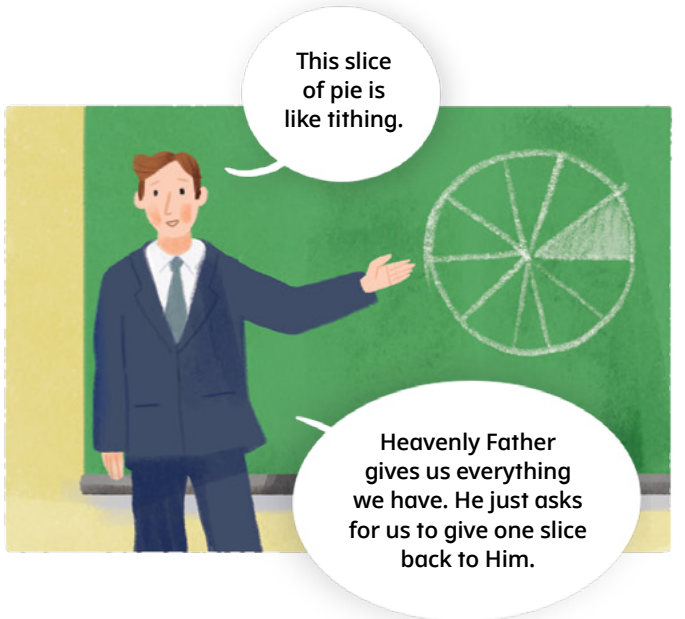
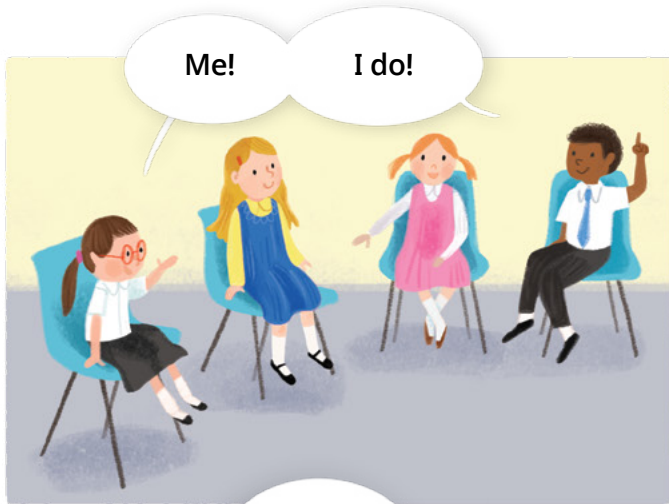
A dim sum meal has many small dishes, like dumplings, buns, meats, rice, and cakes. People often eat it in large groups.



Tithing Pie

By Mikaela Wilkins
(Based on a true story)





The Symbols of Christmas

By Charlotte Larcabal
Church Magazines

Put on this Christmas program with your family! Choose readers for each part. Then gather some things to represent these items:

- A Christmas tree
- The color red
- A candy cane
- A star
- A bell
- A gift

1

Christmas is a special time of year. We sing joyful songs. We decorate our homes. And we give each other gifts. It's a lot of fun! But the colorful gifts and decorations have a special meaning too. They remind us of Jesus Christ, His birth, and all He gave to us. They help us remember the true reason we celebrate Christmas.

Sing: "Once within a Lowly Stable"
(*Children's Songbook*, 41)

2

All over the world, people have **Christmas trees**. Some people decorate mango trees or banana trees. Many people use an evergreen tree. An evergreen tree stays green all year long. That can remind us that Jesus gives us eternal life.

3

The color red is also an important symbol of Christmas. Red can help us remember the Savior's Atonement and the blood He shed for each of us. It can also help us look forward to His Second Coming, when He will wear a red robe!



4

Candy canes look like the sticks that shepherds use to lead their sheep. They can remind us of the shepherds who came to see baby Jesus. They can also remind us that Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd. He will lead us to safety and peace.



5

Lights are everywhere at Christmas. They are like **the star** that shone in the sky when Jesus Christ was born. The shepherds and Wise Men followed the star to find Him. We can choose to follow Him too.

Sing: "Stars Were Gleaming"
(*Children's Songbook*, 37)



6

Bells ring to tell good news. Bells at Christmas can remind us of the good news of Jesus Christ's birth and Atonement.



7

The Wise Men gave **gifts** to Jesus. We give gifts at Christmas too. They can remind us of all the wonderful things Heavenly Father and our Savior give us. Remember that Jesus is the true gift of Christmas!



8

We hope the lights, decorations, and happiness of Christmas fill you with joy and warmth. May they each remind you of Jesus Christ and all He does for us. Merry Christmas!

Sing: "Joy to the World"
(*Hymns*, no. 201)





By Elder
Ulisses Soares
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

Why Do We Call Jesus Christ the Savior?

Jesus was chosen to save us
Before the world was created.



He made it possible for us
to repent and be forgiven.



Because He died for us and
lives again, we will live again.



The Savior Jesus Christ brings us
comfort, strength, help, and healing.

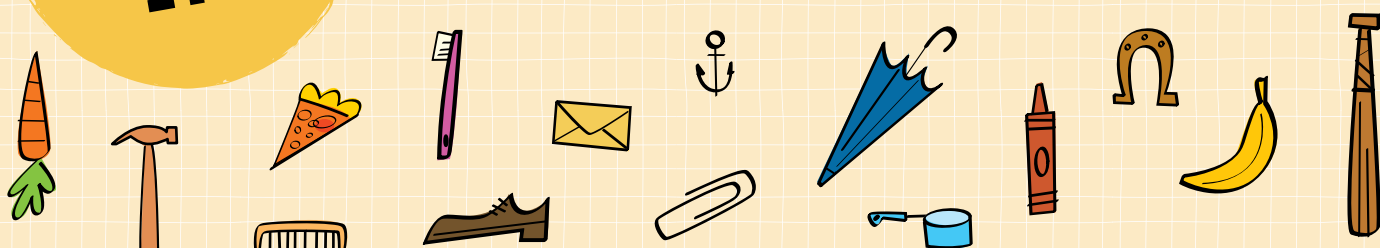


Adapted from "Jesus Christ: The Caregiver of Our Soul," Liahona, May 2021, 82–84.



Find It!

In many parts of Latin America, people set up Nativity scenes but leave the manger empty. They add the baby Jesus on Christmas Eve. It helps them remember His birth! Can you find the hidden objects?



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVE KLUG

Following Jesus Together



Christmas makes me happy because I think about Jesus and Heavenly Father. I like to draw pictures and give them to my family for Christmas.

Emily H., age 11, Texas, USA

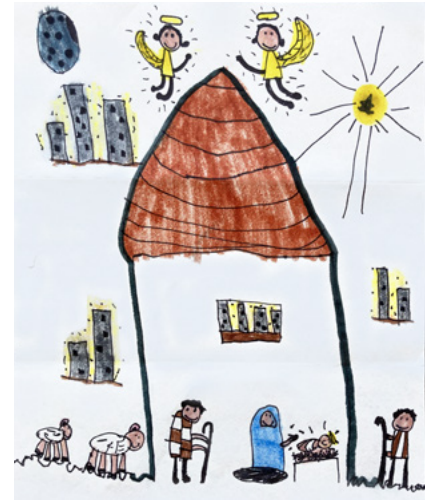


Primary children in **Northern Savonia, Finland**, stand in front of a picture of Jesus painted by members of their ward.



We love to spend time together as a family during Christmas.

Matthias, Samuel, and Isaac M., ages 5, 2, and 8, Utah, USA



Benson B., age 8, Idaho, USA



Megan B., age 11, Pennsylvania, USA



I try to follow Jesus. I want to be a missionary and teach people the gospel.

Melissa B., age 7, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



I helped with a food drive in our city. I dropped off donation bags and later collected the bags when they were filled with food. Helping people makes me happy!

Vienna M., age 6, Alberta, Canada



I made scones in my cooking class at school. I delivered them with my brother and mum to our elderly neighbors for #LightTheWorld.

Blake W., age 13, Victoria, Australia



We have a family Advent calendar with tasty treats. Our grandma also makes us one with scriptures about Jesus to help us remember the meaning of Christmas.

Emilian and Mathis F., ages 8 and 10, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany



"The Stable," Lily S., age 8, Arkansas, USA



I set a goal for the Children and Youth program to learn to draw.

Camila H., age 10, La Libertad, Peru



Joshua N., age 10, Arizona, USA

Send us your art and stories!
Turn to the back cover to see how.

Gifts to Share



By Sister Michelle D. Craig

First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

My grandpa always wanted to play the violin. But his violin sat unused and dusty on his shelf. Then he gave it to me, and it sat for years unused on *my* shelf. I never learned to play it.

But my granddaughter Scarlett has a violin she loves to play. She loves learning new songs. She may not play them perfectly, but she practices and tries hard. Her gift of music brings joy to others. And it blesses her as she gives.

We all have spiritual gifts. These gifts are not always easy to see. But Heavenly Father gives them to each of us because He loves us. He wants us to share our gifts.

These gifts include listening, getting along, caring for each other, not looking for what's wrong in others, and asking for God's help. Sometimes we don't value or share our gifts. Maybe we are afraid that they are not as perfect as we would like. But if we don't share our gifts, we miss a chance to bless God's children. We miss a chance to feel God's love.

Don't let God's gifts to you, even His little gifts, go unused. Offer them to God and His children. The gifts we have from our Heavenly Father are meant to be shared. ●

Adapted from "Less Conspicuous Gifts" (First Presidency Christmas devotional, Dec. 5, 2021), [broadcasts.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/broadcasts).



Talent Match

Our talents can bless others. Match these children with one of the talents they have. What are your talents? How can you use them to serve others?



ILLUSTRATIONS BY JARED BECKSTRAND



MATT and MANDY



Matt and Mandy got a Christmas card from their friends Margo and Paolo.



"Dear Matt and Mandy, guess what? We're living back in Brazil!"

"We'll miss traveling around the world, but we're happy to be home again. And we promise to share all of our adventures."

Merry Christmas!"



I can't wait to hear about Brazil!

Hey, look, there's something else in here.



A parrot?

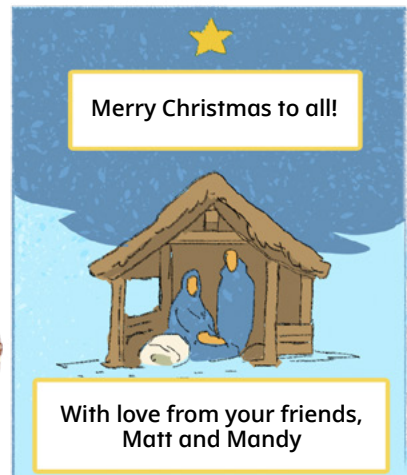
There's a note on the back—"Our new pet, Kiwi, says hello!" Cool!



Sounds like Margo and Paolo will have a lot of fun things to share!

We're grateful for friends like them—and you.

And we're especially thankful for Jesus Christ, who is the best kind of Friend to all of us!



Merry Christmas to all!

With love from your friends,
Matt and Mandy

FOR OLDER KIDS

Family History Corner

Write down questions about your family members. Then give them a quiz! Who got the most questions right?



Children and Youth Idea

Spiritual: "Write down three things you are thankful for. Try to write three new things each day" (*Children's Guidebook*, 47).

Inspiring Words

"My grace is sufficient for thee:
for my strength is made
perfect in weakness"
(2 Corinthians 12:9).

Quick Quiz

Rebekah gave water from the well to how many camels? (See Genesis 24:10, 18–20.)

- a. 5
- b. 82
- c. 10
- d. None because she was allergic to camel fur

Answer: c

Choosing to Give

We used some of our Christmas gift money to help people in need.

Ridge and Blaike G., ages 9 and 13, Arizona, USA



CHIEKO LEARNS ABOUT JESUS

By Lucy Stevenson Ewell

Church Magazines
(Based on a true story)



Hawaii is a group of islands in the Pacific Ocean. It's part of the USA.



There are two temples in Hawaii.



Hawaii's state flower is the yellow hibiscus.

Chieko smoothed her soft, white dress. She was the angel in the Christmas Nativity play, and the show was about to start.

Chieko didn't know much about Christmas or Jesus. Her family had come to Hawaii from Japan, and they were Buddhist. But her father's boss had asked her to be in the play, and she was excited to be a part of it. She worked hard to learn the words.

"Fear not," Chieko said as she stood on the stage. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord." She loved being in this play.

A few years later, Chieko met some missionaries. They were from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "Would you like to come to church to learn more about Jesus Christ?" they asked.

Chieko remembered her part in the Christmas play. *Who is Jesus?* she thought. She wanted to learn more.

When she got home, Chieko asked her parents if she could go to church with the missionaries. "I don't see why not," Mama said. "As long as you still come to the Buddhist temple with us."

At church, Chieko learned new songs and made new friends. In Sunday School, she learned that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Because of Him, she could repent and live with God again someday. Chieko felt something special inside. She knew Jesus was real.

Years passed. Each week, Chieko went to the Buddhist temple with her family. And each Sunday, she went to church.



She and her husband, Edward, had two sons.



She was a schoolteacher and principal.



During her Church service, she gave talks in English, Japanese, Korean, Tongan, and Spanish.

Chieko felt something
special inside.



When she was 15, Chieko wanted to be baptized. She was a little scared to ask her parents. But they supported her. "We know you can be a good daughter and a good Christian too," Papa said. Chieko was so happy!

As she grew up, Chieko kept following Jesus. Sometimes people were unkind to her because she was Japanese. But Chieko didn't let that stop her. She treated everyone with kindness.

When she was 63, Chieko was called to serve as part of the Relief Society General Presidency. She visited Church members around the world. She shared the Savior's love.

Chieko also spoke in general conference. "Let us come unto Christ," she said. "Let us rejoice in Him, the giver of all good things."* ●

* "Rejoice in Every Good Thing," Ensign, Nov. 1991, 89.

THE PURPLE TEDDY BEAR

Liam didn't like his Christmas present.



By Kimberley Warner
(Based on a true story)

On Christmas morning, Liam woke up extra early. He sneaked into the living room with his two younger sisters, Holly and Sarah. There, seven homemade stockings hung in a row. Some were small and wide. Some were long and thin. And some were so old that their colours had faded.

But the important thing for Liam was that each stocking was filled with yummy sweets.

Liam grabbed his stocking and turned it upside down. He frowned. There was one candy cane, an orange, and only a handful of sweets.

"Is this it?" he asked.

Holly and Sarah were frowning too. Then Liam grinned. Maybe this meant his present would be really good! He hoped it was that new video game all his friends were playing.

But when Liam finally opened his present, his disappointment only grew. His gift was a purple teddy bear. It was handmade, with black button eyes and a little stitched smile.

"Merry Christmas, Liam," Mum said with a big smile.

Liam did not smile. This was not the present he wanted.



His little sisters got stuffed animals too, and so did his three older sisters. But that didn't make Liam feel better. This was the worst Christmas ever!

"What's wrong?" his older sister Erin asked after breakfast. "You've been grumpy all morning."

"I don't really like my present," he said. "It's just a teddy bear Mum made. Why didn't she give me something I wanted?"

Erin smiled. "Come with me."

She took him to Mum's bedroom and pointed at the old sewing machine on the table.

"It's Mum's sewing machine," he said. "So what?"

"What else do you see?"

Liam frowned. He saw sewing needles, colourful thread, and some folded pieces of fabric. He also saw a bag of stuffing, soft and fluffy like a cloud.

"I know you wanted Mum to buy you something else for Christmas," Erin said. "But we don't have the money for that. I love the teddy bear Mum made me. It shows how much she loves me."

"What do you mean?"

"It takes time to make a stuffed toy. It takes patience. Mum sat at this table for hours making a toy for each of us. She made sure we each got a present. Don't you think that means she loves us?"

Liam touched the purple fabric that Mum had used to make his teddy bear. Maybe Erin was right. A present didn't need to be fancy to be a good gift. In Primary, Liam had learned that Jesus was the greatest gift, and Jesus was born in a simple stable.

Liam ran to find Mum. He gave her a big hug. "Thank you for the teddy bear," he said.

He didn't think the teddy bear was so silly now. Even if there had been no gifts at all, he felt his family's love. And that made it a special Christmas. ●

This story took place in New Zealand.



CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP

Here are some special gifts you can make this Christmas!



Champurradas

These cookies are from Guatemala!
Here's a recipe you can try at home.

3 1/2 cups flour

2 tablespoons baking powder

1 pinch salt

1 cup butter, softened

1 cup sugar

3 eggs

sesame seeds (optional)

1. Mix the flour, baking powder, and salt together.
2. In a different bowl, mix the butter and sugar. Stir in the eggs one at a time.
3. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture. Stir until combined. Then cover and chill for 30 minutes.
4. Roll the dough into balls, then press them flat. If you want to add sesame seeds, brush the top of each cookie with egg and sprinkle sesame seeds on top.
5. Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 20 minutes or until the edges turn golden brown.

You could fill a bag or jar with these stars and add a nice note to cheer someone up!

Mini Origami Stars



1. Cut strips of paper, about 8 1/2 inches (21.5 cm) long and 1/2 inch (1 cm) wide.
2. Loop one end of a paper strip around like a ribbon.
3. Tuck the tail of the paper into the loop, like a knot. Pull tight, but be careful not to rip the paper.



Paper-Plate Nativity



Make your own Nativity out of paper plates! These are instructions for Mary and baby Jesus. Next make Joseph, angels, shepherds, and Wise Men!

1. Fold in one side of a paper plate at an angle.
2. Fold in the other side at the same angle so that the plate looks like a triangle.
3. Cut out a paper circle for a head. Draw a face on the circle.
4. Tape, glue, or staple the head in place at the top of the triangle.

To make the baby Jesus: Fold up the bottom third of the plate. Then fold in the sides and glue in place. Cut out a circle for the head and draw a face on it. Tuck it into the top fold so the face is peeking out of the "blanket."



4. Press the knot flat and tuck the little tail into one of the folds.

5. The knot will have five edges.

6. Now wrap the rest of the paper around the shape. It should easily fold in the correct direction.

7. Tuck the very end of the tail into one of the folds.

8. Carefully pinch each side in so that the star puffs up. Keep making as many stars as you'd like!

Christmas Service



**By Danido E., age 11,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

I went to a Christmas activity for my ward. Every year we make gifts to give to people who don't have very much. I really enjoy doing this activity. Jesus Christ taught us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. He wants us to help others who are in need. I feel that this activity has brought me closer to God and

helped me feel God's love for His children on earth. God wants us to love one another.

I love going to church. I have learned the gospel and know what Heavenly Father wants me to do. He wants me to follow Him and become a better person. ●





ILLUSTRATION BY BRYAN BEACH

Can you find these pictures on the next pages?



Hi, Friends!



I try to be kind like Jesus.
Owen N., age 3, Nevada, USA



I like to sing "Silent Night."
Abigail D., age 3, Washington, D.C., USA



I made a gingerbread house with
my family!
Tucker S., age 4, Alabama, USA



I like visiting the cemetery on
Christmas Eve. We light candles on
the graves of family and friends.
Aasa L., age 3, Northern Savonia, Finland

Follow the Star

Help lead the Wise Men to Bethlehem!



ILLUSTRATIONS BY RYLEE STANTON

You can read about the Wise Men in Matthew 2:1-11.

JESUS IS BORN!

By Jennifer Maddy



Long ago, an angel named Gabriel came to a young woman named Mary. The angel told Mary she would have a baby. The baby would be Jesus Christ, the Son of God!



Mary's husband, Joseph, was a good man. He was a carpenter.



Joseph and Mary went to the city of Bethlehem.



It was time for Mary to have her baby! Joseph and Mary found a stable to stay in.



An angel told shepherds about the new baby. The shepherds ran to see Him.



A bright star shone in the sky. The shepherds were so happy to see baby Jesus.



At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ! ●

The NEW TEACHER

By Jane McBride
(Based on a true story)

Anna liked going to Sunbeam class. She liked her teachers, Brother and Sister Lee. She liked the lessons about Jesus. She liked knowing the words to the songs.

But now she wouldn't be in the Sunbeam class anymore. Today she would be in a new Primary class. She would have new teachers. She would sit in a new row in singing time. She would have a new classroom.

Anna was nervous. She wanted to sit with Sister Lee. She tried not to cry as she walked into the Primary room.

One of her new teachers smiled at her. "Hi, I'm Sister Ball. What's your name?"

"I'm Anna," Anna said.

Sister Ball patted the chair next to her. "Would you like



to sit by me? This is my first time in Primary.”

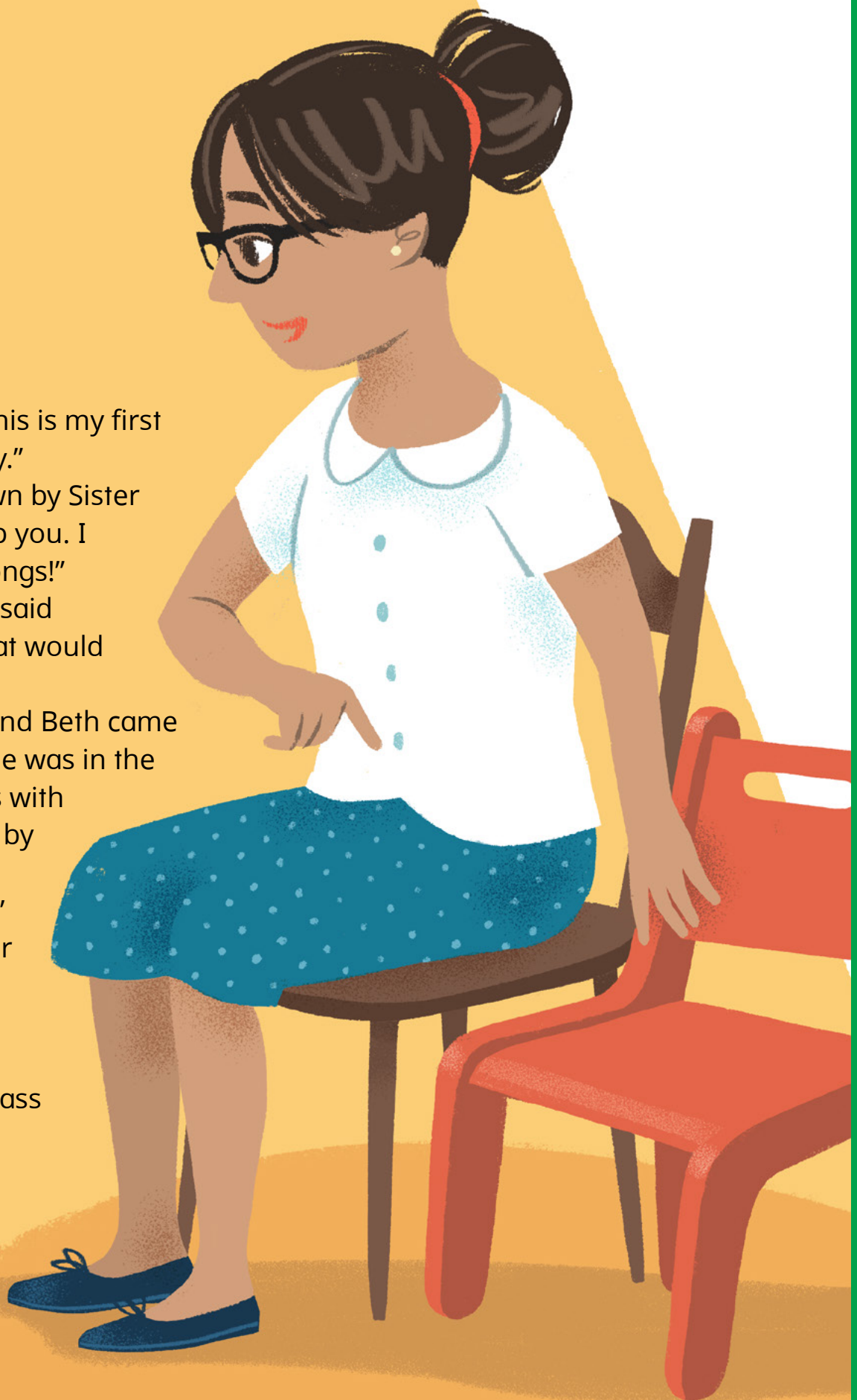
Anna sat down by Sister Ball. “I can help you. I know all the songs!”

“Thank you,” said Sister Ball. “That would be a big help.”

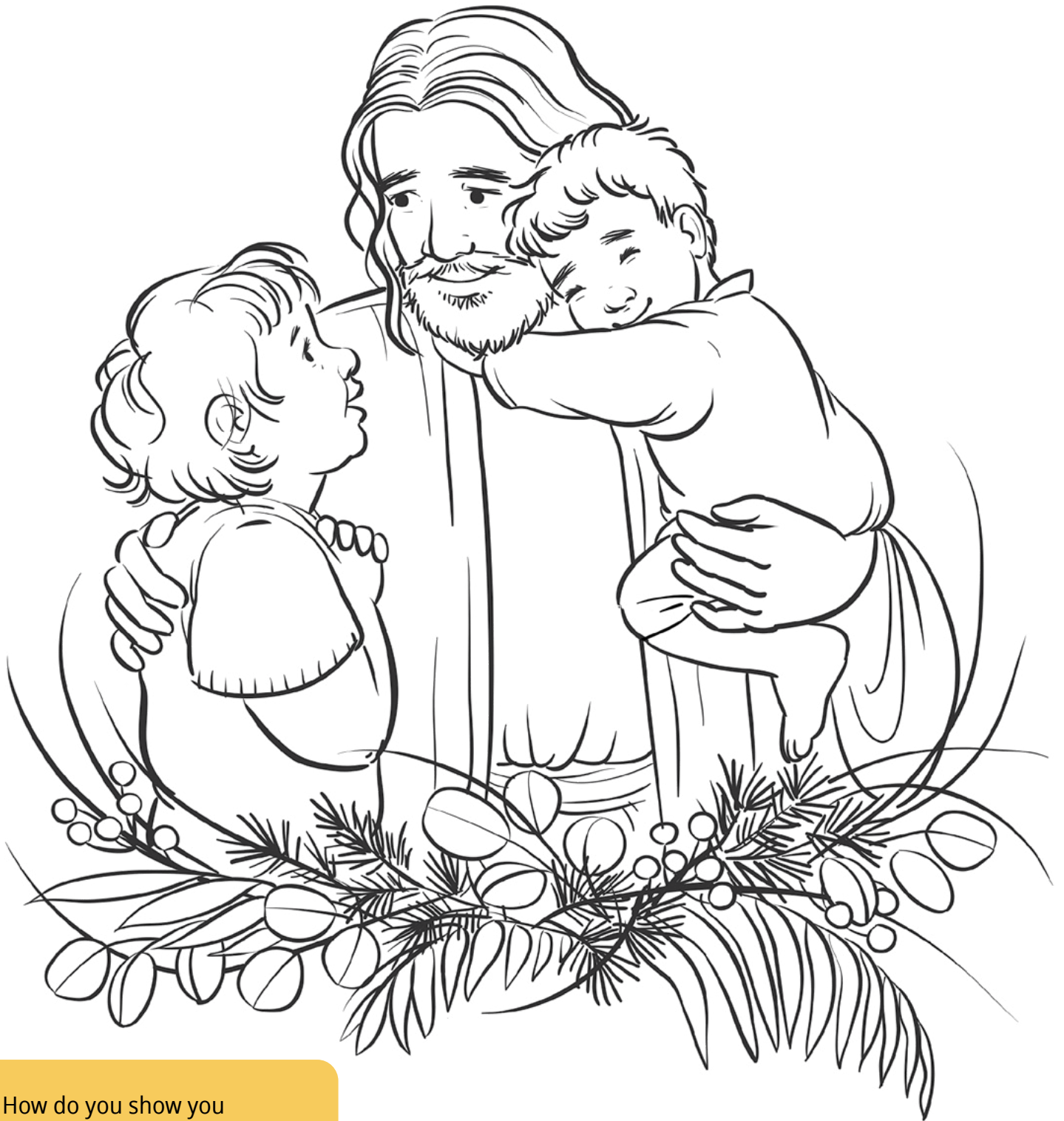
Soon her friend Beth came in. Last year she was in the Sunbeam class with Anna. Beth sat by Anna.

“This is Beth,” Anna told Sister Ball.

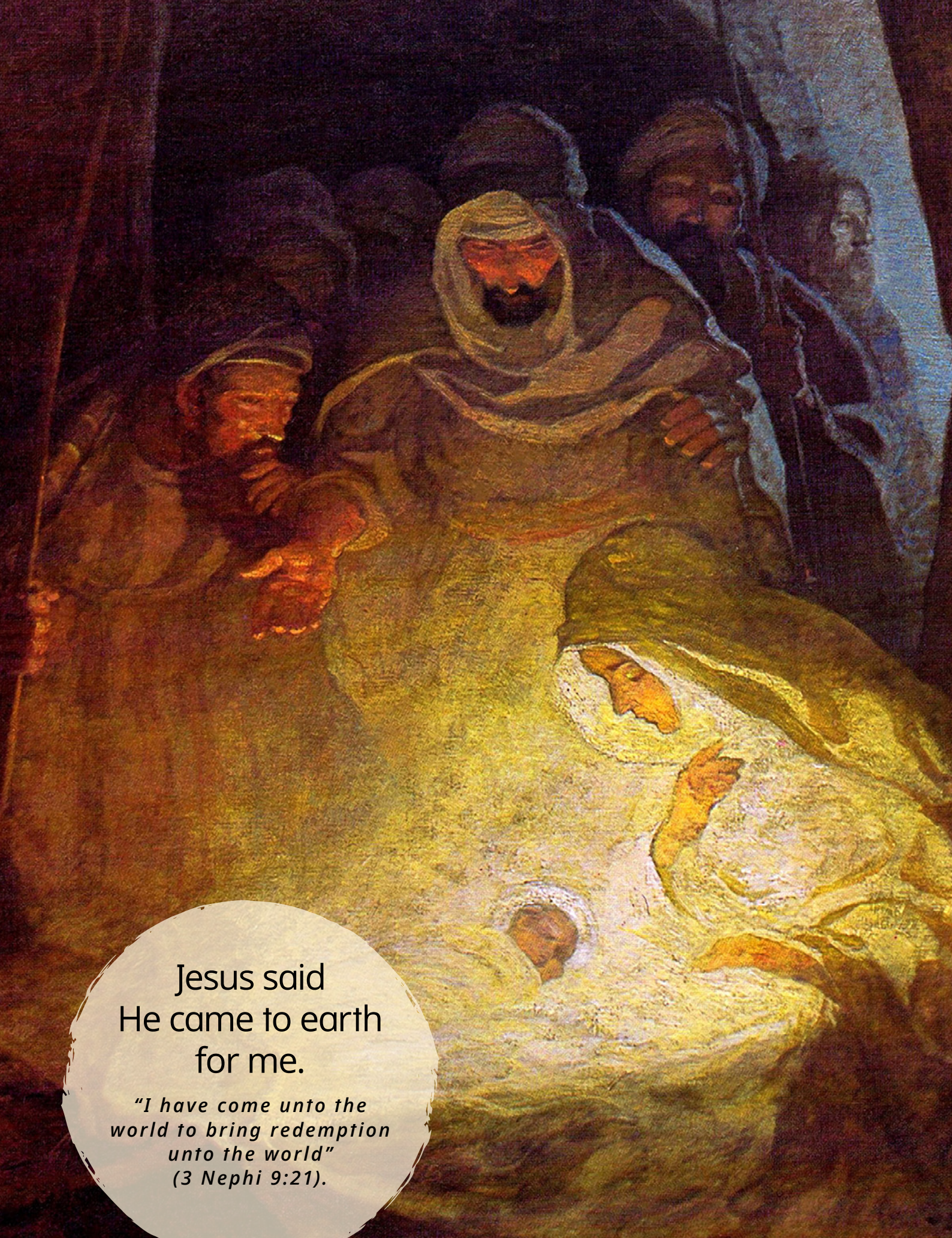
Anna smiled. She liked her new Primary class after all! ●



I Love Jesus Christ



How do you show you love Jesus?



Jesus said
He came to earth
for me.

*"I have come unto the
world to bring redemption
unto the world"
(3 Nephi 9:21).*



DEAR PARENTS,

Christmas is a special time to remember Jesus Christ. You and your family could do the Christmas program on page 24. You could also read the Nativity story on page 44. What else can you do to remember Him?

Merry Christmas!
The *Friend*



READING TIP

When you read aloud with your child, stop sometimes and ask them questions. You could ask what they know about a word or idea. Or you could ask them what they think happens next in a story.



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The following information and permission must be included:

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Age	Boy / Girl	State / Province / Region, Country

I give my permission to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to use my child's submission and photo on the Church websites and social media platforms as well as for Church reports, print products, video, publications, and training materials.

Signature of parent or legal guardian	Date
Email of parent or legal guardian	

May the *Friend* contact you with a survey?

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