



Sunday, November 1 – Saturday, November 7 • 2020

SUN 1

22nd Sunday after Pentecost
All Saints Day

All Souls Day

MON 2

TUES 3

WED 4

THUR 5

FRI 6

SAT 7

Things to keep in mind this week...

Planning ahead...

Revised Common Lectionary (Year A)

Matthew 5:1–12

the focus for age-level
materials

Revelation 7:9–17

Psalm 34:1–10, 22

1 John 3:1–3

 Seasons of the
Spirit™ is based
on the semi-continuous
readings of the Revised
Common Lectionary.

Liturgical colour:
green

Lection Connection links
current events with this
week's scriptures. Go to [www.
seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca) and click on
the link.

November 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October 2020

S M T W T F S

4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12 13 14 15 16 17

18 19 20 21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30 31

December 2020

S M T W T F S

1 2 3 4 5

9 10 11 12

16 17 18 19

23 24 25 26

Based on *In God's Hands: Common Prayer for the World*, ed. by Hugh McCullum and Terry MacArthur (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2006).





Revelation 7:9–17
Psalm 34:1–10, 22
Matthew 5:1–12
the focus in age-level materials
1 John 3:1–3

 Seasons of the Spirit™ is based on the semi-continuous readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

For material for Reformation Day, go to www.seasonsonline.ca. Click on Library tab.

On the Right Road

On this All Saints Day when we are reminded of the saints who have gone before, we encounter texts that blur the line between past, present, and future by encouraging us to travel the long trodden road toward God's love, justice, and liberation.

Revelation 7:9–17 confronts imperial Rome and systems of domination with vivid and dramatic eschatological language, picturing a future in which the blessings have come into fullness. Differences of language, culture, or any other means of human separation create no barriers for inclusion in this place of justice, compassion, and healing. Revelation calls upon the churches to become witnesses to this ultimate promise.

The writer of **Psalm 34:1–10, 22** refuses to let troubles of any sort keep one from living in the blessing and presence of God. In all situations, one can magnify the glory of God because it is never about momentary loss, but rather living in relationship with this God of liberation, justice, and mercy.

Matthew 5:1–12 Those who follow Jesus up the mountain, both disciples and crowd, can hardly be faulted for being reminded of Moses who helped shape a motley crew of wandering ex-slaves into a community of liberation. Biblical scholars point out the many ways the gospel of Matthew helps make the connection between Jesus and Moses. It is on this mountain that Jesus offers an inaugural sermon akin to Jesus's inaugural message at Nazareth, which is recorded in the gospel of Luke. In both Nazareth and on the mountain, Jesus sets forth the identity, purpose, and direction of his ministry.

The crowd, hanging further back, are keenly aware of the poverty and injustices they face at the hands of imperial Rome. Can this Jesus make any difference in their lives and world? The disciples have already thrown their lot in with Jesus, but their understanding of what Jesus is calling them to be and do is still in the formative stage. As a prophet and leader of the divinely inspired liberation movement to which Moses earlier gave leadership, Jesus knows what is at stake.

Blessed One, you never cease to surprise us. We grow accustomed to a way of accounting for our lives that often puts us in the losing column. Help us claim the identity and direction you offer to us so that we may stay on the road to your freedom, justice, mercy, and compassion. Amen.

By his very life, Jesus represents for the people the character of God who calls them into a liberated and justice-oriented way of living that is in direct opposition to the controlling, oppressive way of living established by Rome. Jesus invites and encourages them to be citizens of this new way of being, which he calls the kingdom of God.

The blessings that follow only make sense for a people who recognize the threat of domination systems because they live it. Each blessing is designed to support, encourage, and nurture a way of life that is counter to the exploitation and oppression they are familiar. In his commentary in *Feasting on the Word*, Patrick Gray tells us that the word blessing translated from the Hebrew *ashar* is best translated "you are on the right road." In other words, Jesus says, "You are on the right road when you are in poor in spirit... when you mourn...when you are meek...when you hunger and thirst for righteousness."

Being on the right road and blessing are synonymous. There is no contradiction between mourning and blessing if you are on the road toward God's realm of liberation and justice. Each of the blessings takes on new and vital meaning because they are no longer about an unrealizable aspiration. On the contrary, they are about the energy, spirit, and power given to everyone in the present who is on this road embracing a realm of God living. For those who are on the right road, there also exists a new experience of time, one in which those who have died or gone before share in the present, offering support and encouragement. Something we might expect from all the saints.

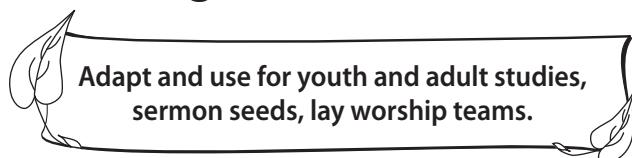
1 John 3:1–3 returns to the theme of identity and purpose. Core to that identity is the basic premise of knowing you are loved. It is this love that purifies us for living as citizens of God's realm.

• • •

In this week's readings, there is no disconnect between hard times and God's love. Just the opposite, love can lead us into the struggle and a new way of living, a new world. The blessing comes in knowing this road, this path, however challenging, is one that leads to life.



Reflecting on the Word



Connecting with life

- Who in your life has been a model that you would wish to emulate? What about their life did you find inspiring?

Scripture

Revelation 7:9–17 In his book *Can I Get A Witness*, Brian Blount makes a compelling argument that Revelation was written as an antiviolence letter calling upon cautious congregations to stand up and give witness to the ethical claims of God's realm rather than keep their heads down in the face of imperial oppression. Firmly grounded in the African American tradition, Blount says to give glory to God is to proclaim and live God's justice.

- How does a theology of inclusion threaten and challenge a system and theology based on domination?
- What would cause congregations to be cautious rather than live as a bold witness?
- What would motivate congregations to live with courage and be a witness to God's Realm?

Psalm 34:1–10, 22 expresses the writer's belief that struggles, difficulties, and hardship can never determine a person's attitude or their experience of life.

What role might humility play in our capacity to experience the joy even during hard times?

How can offering praise change one's outlook and orientation?

Matthew 5:1–12 has little to do with how the world is experienced by most people and everything to do with how it can be experienced when one rejects the norms and practices of imperial living and instead lives into the reality of God's realm now. Suffering, hardship, hunger, and violence may all still be present as common mani-

Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

Similar to last week, there is a tension to be held in this week's worship as well. It is common to read Matthew 5:1–12 as a text of preferential love. But these verses hold the very tension that makes being a follower of the Christ a challenge. Unlike the message of the "prosperity gospel" – a theology that claims that riches are somehow rewards – this worship invites congregants to embrace the fact that it is in our suffering and struggles that we might most intimately know God and be known by our Creator.

festations found in systems of domination, but they no longer set the terms for whether we find meaning, fulfillment, joy, and hope.

What might it mean for followers of Jesus to be poor in spirit, and how could this be an indicator of being on the "right road" as described in the Biblical Background?

What might cause you to be poor in spirit, and how could this be a sign that you are on the right road rather than a sign of failure?

Poverty brought on by Roman oppression, including heavy taxes and theft of land meant sorrow was a constant companion for the poor.

How might sorrow be turned into a blessing for individuals and communities, reversing the effects of their oppression? In what way might sorrow signal they are following the way of Jesus?

How might someone's mourning and experiencing grief be a marker of living as a citizen of God's realm?

In what ways might the blessings articulated by Jesus provide an alternative way of living that creates a direct challenge to domination, hierarchy, and the privileges closely guarded by those with power?

- What do you see as the most common indicators people look to as a means of assessing how they are doing in life or judging if the nation is on the right path?
- Do you find those common markers helpful, or might they reinforce ways of living that are harmful?

1 John 3:1–3

- What enables you to feel that you are fully loved for who you are?

Connecting scripture and life

- Who are the saints in your life or the life of your congregation from whom you draw support, encouragement, and hope?
- What are the markers that might indicate your congregation is on the right road?
- How might this orientation of travelling on the "right road" challenge you or your congregation in new ways?

Another aspect of this week's worship is the invitation to have people identify themselves as beloved of God. We tend to distance ourselves from the "blessed" of the beatitudes, but this worship asks us to step inside the realm of God's attention by recognizing ourselves as beloved (or blessed). As you explore this together, be aware of the dynamics of the empire-building world in which we live and how disenfranchised even the "middle class" of our world may be feeling. Blessed are we/they.



On the Right Road

Prepare

NOTE: All of these suggestions are mere starting points; adapt, delete, and add according to your local needs.

- Recruit volunteers needed for worship.
- Choose an option for hearing Matthew 5:1–12. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “Teaching on the Mountain” on p. 130. For Blessed and beloved, prepare to project contrasting images as described in opening the word.
- Bring items for setting the worship space.
- For Revelation 7:9–17, prepare to project images of the people and communities who have gone through the ordeals of being refugees, suffering hunger and thirst, surviving natural disasters, persecuted because of racism, and so on.
- For Psalm 34:1–10, 22, prepare to project visuals of the ways we might “taste and see” that God is good or images that evoke the idea that we are surrounded by “angels” of God and helped by them in times of trouble.
- Prepare to project photographs and texts of people who have died in the past year, as described under “Remembering the saints.”
- You might choose to print Truth Teller on or in your bulletin (in the Images to Project and Print folder). For background to the art and artist, see “Connecting with the Art” on p. 10.

- Bring song such as “Roll Over the Ocean” (*Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*, #15 on *Seasons Music CD, vol. 6*. Printed music and recording also available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads*, www.seasonsonline.ca).
- Set stations as described on pp. 131–132.

Music Suggestions

As We Go Now

Stephen Fischbacher; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*

Come, Let Us Seek Our God’s Protection

Tom Colvin; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*

Roll Over the Ocean

Traditional; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*

Blest Are They

David Haas

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

Lesbia Scott

Take My Gifts and Let Me Love You

Shirley Erena Murray, Colin Gibson

You Are Holy, You are Whole

Per Harling

You Are Salt for the Earth, O People

Marty Haugen

A chart that shows the licence holder(s) for each song in each of the 9 *Seasons of the Spirit* Music Volumes can be found at www.seasonsonline.ca. Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

Gather

Call to worship

ONE: Beloved of God, let us gather in worship.

ALL: Beloved are all who worship and give thanks.

ONE: Beloved – all who have hungered and who thirst, in body or spirit, let us gather in worship.

ALL: Beloved – all who grieve and mourn, and strive for healing of the soul, let us gather in worship.

ONE: Beloved – all who feel meek, who struggle for power and strength in this overwhelming world, let us gather in worship.

ALL: Beloved – you who have shown mercy, who seek peace, and who stand up for justice, let us gather in worship.

ONE: Beloved are you who follow Jesus’ way.

ALL: In our worship, let us hear this invitation to be known and seen by God.

ONE: Come, let us gather and hear again the affirmations of Jesus as we worship.

Opening prayer

In a world full of pain and confusion,
we come seeking your healing and clarity.

In a world overwhelmed with information and ideas,
we come seeking guidance about which to choose and
listen to.

In a world of diversity and confusion,
we come wanting to celebrate your exuberance,
yet needing your wisdom to understand each other fully.
In a world where creation itself moans for new life,
we come hoping to be guided toward renewal.

Like the multitudes who gathered to listen to Jesus,
we gather to listen to you, Loving God.



Worship Outline • November 1, 2020

Like the thousands hungry for salvation and wholeness,
we hunger for meaning and purpose as well.
Like lost sheep in need of direction,
we have come to worship for your guiding love.
Show us the way, we pray. Amen.

Prayer of confession

It's not "right" in this world to be poor.
It's not considered "good" to be weak or vulnerable.
We get the message everywhere that success is measured by
wealth, power, and privilege,
yet we want you to know, Great Creator, that we hear you
speaking clearly about what the "right" road is.
We hear you inviting us to understand that in our poverty
we can find great wealth;

in our weakness, we can find surprising strength;
and that in our lost-ness, we are found by you.
We confess, Shepherding Lamb, that we struggle to accept
these truths,
but we are here to be forgiven, healed, and guided again on
right paths.
Lead us, we pray. Amen.

Words of affirmation

There were multitudes hearing it from Jesus... There will
be multitudes gathered hearing it in the new heaven... And
wherever we are, as one or many, we are offered the same
words of healing and renewal: Blessed are you. Beloved are
you.

Engage

Opening the word

Revelation 7:9-17

The book of Revelation speaks powerfully to our world today. Prepare to project images of the people and communities who have gone through the ordeals of being refugees, suffering great hunger and thirst, surviving natural disasters, persecuted because of racism, and so on. Showing these, and hearing the words, "Who are these, and where have they come from?" "They are the ones who have come through the great ordeal" would be an evocative way of connecting the message of John of Patmos to our current time.

Psalm 34:1-10, 22

In contrast to the Revelation visuals, prepare to project images of the ways we might "taste and see" that God is good, or images that evoke the idea that we are surrounded by the "angels" of God and are helped by them in times of trouble. Given that this is likely a Communion Sunday, perhaps including this psalm in the words of invitation – "Taste and see that God is good" – might bring home the depth of the sacrament of Communion as well.

1 John 3:1-3

All Saints Day could be a meaningful and powerful time to invite everyone in the space (if your congregation is not too large) to speak their names out loud and invite them to claim their status as children of God. Example: "I am _____, and I am a child of God." Taking the time to do so in worship, on a Sunday in which we remember the "saints" of our lives – those who have died – might offer a concrete and visual sense that we are all, indeed, one family of God's children.

Moving into Matthew 5:1-12 the focus scripture for age-level materials in ENCORE

Choose from the following:

Bible story Have a storyteller present the story "[Teaching on the Mountain](#)" (p.130).

Blessed and beloved Project contrasting images that will help people see and feel the deep meaning of the words blessed and beloved. For instance, images of people of great wealth next to people living in poverty. Or images of people standing up for justice next to people causing injury to the planet or others.

Affirm that God loves everyone, but in these instances with which would God be most pleased?

This scripture would have turned the world order upside down. Most of the listeners of that time would have experienced themselves on the bottom of the ladder of society until these words were spoken. Invite listeners to take some time to reflect on ways, times, and situations when they might feel "on the bottom." Are there ways they feel downtrodden, dejected, judged, behind, on the outside? Then, invite them to imagine Jesus speaking words to them directly.

Read the passage replacing the word "blessed" with the word "beloved." Beloved are you...

After the reading, invite people in pairs or threes to share what it feels like to have their particular low estate transformed into something Jesus and God know and understand, and because of which they are loved and blessed. (Be sure to establish good boundaries for what people can share, especially around what others have shared with them.)

Invite children, young people, and all who wish to move to the stations. Others will remain seated for proclaiming the word.



Respond

After proclaiming the word, you might invite those who have not already done so to move to and around the stations, taking ten minutes or so with a chosen practice.

Sing or listen to a song such as “Roll Over the Ocean” as people gather together again (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6, #15 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 6. Printed music and recording also available at *Seasons* MP3 Downloads, www.seasonsonline.ca).

Prayers of the people

We have not always recognized ourselves in Jesus’ words, Merciful God.

We do not always know how to receive your blessings. Yet, we hear that we are beloved, and our hardened hearts are melted by the kindness and generosity in these words. We do hunger, Holy One, and we know others hunger, too. We thirst, and we mourn; we grieve, and we seek peace; we strive to be merciful and just, and we know we are not perfect.

In your loving grace, help us to hear your blessings, and be empowered by them, to stand tall in our faith and renewed in spirit, as we journey as your people seeking a new world order.

And when our peace has meant hunger or thirst, suffering or pain for others, please forgive us and show us a new way. When our leaders have tromped on the peace of others; when our governments have made decisions that cause brokenness in our world;

when the privileged of this planet do not see the diminishment to others that makes their comfort possible, help us to see and understand, and then to act.

We pray for renewal.

We pray that the reversals we now understand will make way for dignity and wholeness to be experienced by all, and for a new way to be paved.

We pray for justice to prevail, so that peace may be manifest for all.

And we offer ourselves, your children, your multitudes, your beloved, to the work of your blessings and renewal.

Help us to awaken to your presence and your grace.

We pray in Christ’s name. Amen.

Remembering the saints

Collect a photograph of each person from the congregation who died in the past year. Create a slide show with the photographs. Type a verse from a psalm or other reading that was used during their memorial service next to each person’s photo. As each slide is projected, state the name of the person and read the verse in the margin.

Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

Because you have loved us, we dedicate ourselves to loving others.

Because you have forgiven us, we dedicate ourselves to forgiving others.

Because you have blessed us, we dedicate ourselves to being blessings to others.

Take these gifts, receive this worship, and know our gratitude and devotion, today and always. Amen.

Bless

Beloved of God, rejoice and be glad, for yours is the realm of God.

Go in peace, inviting all to know their belovedness in God’s light.

Special Days Commentary**November 1 – All Saints Day****November 2 – All Souls Day**

In many churches, All Saints Day (November 1) celebrates all people of faith, recalling how, in New Testament usage, the word saints refers to Christians collectively, as well as those people of special significance who have been set apart by the church or canonized. It is the recognition of the common bond of Christians, both living and dead, and the common bond of the church here on Earth and the church triumphant in heaven. If November 1 falls on a weekday, All Saints Day is generally observed on the following Sunday.

For those traditions who use All Saints Day to commemorate canonized saints or those whose lives have been particularly Christ-like, All Souls Day on November 2 pro-

vides an opportunity to remember other Christians who have died. A simple, reflective service can provide an opportunity to invite those who have been bereaved during the year to gather to remember their loved ones in prayer.

The night before All Saints Day was originally known as All Hallows Eve and, over time, became shortened to Halloween. Tracing its roots to an ancient Celtic day of the dead known as Samhain, it was believed that souls and supernatural beings would wander the night. Various traditions have merged over time, ranging from praying for saints and “lost souls” to children dressing up in costumes and going from door to door in search of treats.

Note: As All Saints falls on Sunday in 2020, *Seasons of the Spirit*™ have used the All Saints Day lections for worship, learning, and serving.

The True Spirit of Jesus

Lust for money, power, and conquest did not escape moral condemnation at our hands, nor did we fail to contrast this conspicuous trait of the dominant race with the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus.

I remember the words of one old battle-scarred warrior. I was at the time meeting with groups of young men – Sioux, Cheyenne, Cree, Ojibwe, and others – in log cabins or little framed chapels, trying to set before them the simple language the life and character of the man Jesus.

The old warrior got up and said, "Why, we have followed this law you speak of for untold ages! We owned nothing, because everything is from the Creator. Food was free, land as free and sunshine and rain. Who has changed all this? The white man. And yet he says he is a believer in God! He does not seem to inherit any of the

traits of his Father, nor does he follow the example set by his brother Christ."

Another of the older men, called upon for his views, kept a long silence. Finally, he said, "I have come to the conclusion that this Jesus was an Indian. He was opposed to material acquisitions and to great possession. He was inclined to peace. He was as unpractical as any Indian and set no price upon his labor of love. These are not the principles upon which the white man has founded his civilization. It is strange that he could not rise to those simple principles which were so commonly observed among our people."

*From the book The Soul of an Indian.
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Teaching on the Mountain

Based on Matthew 5:1–12

Jesus' days were busy. He walked all over Galilee, teaching in synagogues and healing the sick. He taught the good news of God's plan for everyone. People told their friends, and crowds of people came when they heard he was heading their way.

When Jesus saw the crowd of people, he went up the mountain. The disciples, Jesus' closest friends, went with him. When they came to a small flat area, Jesus sat down. This was a signal for the others to sit down, too, because Jesus was going to teach them. The crowd of people was nearby, so they could hear Jesus' words, too.

After time to rest, Jesus began to teach the disciples, saying,

"Blessed are people who feel hopeless, for they will again know that God is with them.

Blessed are the people who see the deep hurts in the world, for they will see that God is with them.

Blessed are the people who wait for God's ways to cover Earth, for they will see the greatness of God.

Blessed are the people who look for justice and fairness, for everyone for they will see the mercy of God.

Blessed are the people who show kindness to others, for they will know the forgiveness of God.

Blessed are the people who seek to follow God's way, for they will know themselves to be in the presence of God.

Blessed are the people who work for peace, for they will know that they are children of God.

Blessed are the people who are shamed or punished, for following God's way for they will be with God forever.

Blessed are you when people call you names because you love God. Be full of joy for God will not forget you."

A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



Bible story

Materials recording of today's story "Teaching on the Mountain," player, paper or drawing pads, crayons, pencils, a copy of the directions displayed where all can see; alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

The practice of storytelling

Directions

1. Listen to the story "Teaching on the Mountain."
2. Use the art supplies to write or draw your response to the story.



Living, Learning, Growing as Disciples

The following stations might be set up around your worship space or in other places around the church. Choose one or more practices, depending on your space and numbers. Display the [directions](#).

For your convenience, instructions are formatted for printing and available in the Stations folder.

The article “[Connecting with the Art](#)” on page 10 provides some background to the two posters for Season of Creation, Pentecost 2 and some art engagement ideas for individuals and groups. You might choose to add an Art Engagement station each week, using one of the art engagement ideas.

Creator of life and promise, you imagined our unfolding world and called it into being.

Bookmarks

Materials card stock or heavy paper cut into rectangles; markers, hole punch, ribbon, a copy of the [directions](#) displayed where all can see



Suitable for all ages working together

The practice of encouragement

Directions

Saints are people who help us to follow Jesus’ teachings and live in God’s way.

1. Select someone you know who is a saint of God.
2. Print that person’s name on one side of the bookmark.
3. On the reverse side, print: You are a saint of God.
4. Punch a hole near the top of the bookmark.
5. Put pieces of ribbon through the hole and tie it in place.
6. Deliver or send your bookmark to the person.

Faith family tree

Materials poster board with a large tree and branches drawn on it, markers, a copy of the [directions](#) displayed where all can see



Suitable for all ages working together

The practice of celebrating the saints

Directions

1. Take a few minutes to think about the “saints” in your church community (or in the wider world of faith) who have helped establish your faith/church.
2. Take turns adding names to the tree and with each name, write a few words about what makes this person vital to your faith or church community.
3. Say a short prayer lifting the people named and thank God for their witness.

Finger labyrinth

Materials pencils, copies of a finger labyrinth (type “finger labyrinth” into your computer search engine, or copy from the *Virtual Resource Booklet* that is in the Library at www.seasonsonline.ca), copy of the [directions](#) displayed where all can see



Suitable for all ages working together

The practice of contemplation

Directions

As we try to follow God’s way, it is important to take time apart to think about Jesus’ teachings. One way we can do this is to walk the path of a labyrinth to meditate and pray. Labyrinths are often outdoors, but some people also like to use a finger labyrinth.

1. Take a copy of the finger labyrinth.
2. Find the “entrance” to the labyrinth and, using your finger or pencil, slowly follow the path to the middle of the labyrinth.
3. As you travel the path in, think about the saints in your life.
4. When you reach the middle, pause and offer a prayer of thanks for that person, and pray for that person.
5. As you travel out again, think about ways you are living in the way of Jesus.

Making news personal

Materials Bibles or copies of Matthew 5:2–9, paper, pencils, markers, variety of pictures of people who have been denied food, shelter, those crying, those bringing comfort (these pictures should represent a diverse people such as different skin tones, economic status, genders, sexual orientations, age, and physical ability), copy of the directions displayed where all can see



Magnify God

Materials one magnifying glass per participant; various everyday objects that can found at home or school, copies of the directions, one for each person



The practice of compassion

Directions

You are an intern at a major newspaper. Your assignment is to report on a person who was in attendance at a recent political rally.

1. Take one picture from the collection displayed.
2. As you take it say: "This person is entrusted to my care."
3. Read Matthew 5:2–9.
4. Write a short story that includes a) caption for the picture b) explanation for who, what, when, where, and how the condition happened to the person in the picture. You will need to make up names and information.
5. Display your article for others who come to this station to read, and spend time reading other contributions. Or, if you are doing this as a group, show and tell about your picture and description.
6. What do the "articles" tell us about our opinions, attitudes, and knowledge concerning people?
7. Now that you somewhat know the people in the pictures, how might you stand in solidarity with them in bringing God's love on Earth? Who are these children of God who have a name and story?
8. Re-read Matthew 5:2–9 slowly, pausing after each verse.

The practice of praise

Directions

Sometimes we act and think as if the God-presence is small. The psalmist reminds us to **magnify** God.

1. Take a magnifying glass.
2. Begin by examining your fingernails, clothing, hairs on your arm.
3. What do you notice with the magnifying glass? What do you see that you otherwise can't?
4. Examine the objects on the table.
5. If it is possible in your setting, move slowly around the room examining objects through the magnifying glass. Think of yourself as an inspector looking for clues. What are you finding?
6. Show others your discoveries and ask about their discoveries.
7. Quietly reflect on or discuss what happens when we look at something made bigger. Imagine if we took a magnifying glass to a memory we have of God helping us, blessing us. The feeling would be bigger than our bodies. Others would have to help us carry it. The good feeling would spread far and wide.
8. Conclude your time at this station by praying the words of the psalmist – magnifying God.

Psalm 34:1–4 in two paraphrases:

I must bless the Holy One at all times,
With sacred psalms always on my lips.
For the Holy One, my soul sings for joy.
May the poor and afflicted hear and rejoice.
Magnify the Holy One with me;
Let us exalt the Holy Name together.

Songs for the Holy One by Thomas Barnett and Donald Patriquin.

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I bless God every chance I get; my lungs expand with God's praise.
I live and breathe God; if things aren't going well hear this and be happy.
Join me in spreading the news; together let's get the word out.
God met me more than halfway, God freed me from my anxious fears.

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Blessed by God

Based on Matthew 5:1-12

Share this blessing song with others.

The Blessing Song

(tune: "B-I-N-G-O")

Blessings are God's way of love,
and we are all a blessing.

BLESS (clap as each letter is named)

BLESS

And we are all a blessing.

"Come, sit down, my friends. I have something important to say to you. I want you to be my disciples."

Jesus looked around. Many of his friends were with him. This would be a good time to sit on the hillside and talk together. This would be a good time to tell his friends what it means to be a disciple.

"Friends, when you see someone hungry, know that God blesses them. God doesn't want anyone to be hungry. Share your food with others.

When you see someone sad, know that God blesses them. God wants to help their sadness go away. Please help others who are feeling sad.

When you see someone who wants to know more about God, know that God blesses them. God wants to help everyone know more about God's way. Be kind and loving, share your food and toys, and people will know what God is like.

When you see someone who is kind to others, know that God blesses them. God wants kindness to come to them, too. Care about other people. God cares about you very much.

When you see someone who is gentle and who doesn't hurt others, know that God blesses them. They will always be part of God's family. Tell others that God loves them.

When you see someone who tells the truth and is honest with God, know that God blesses them. God loves them and will always be with them. Tell others that we can always trust God.

Friends, you are all God's children. Listen to God. Listen to each other."

Jesus looked around at all his friends again.

"You are my disciples," Jesus said. "I love you, and I want you to be happy. You are a blessing to others when you live God's way."

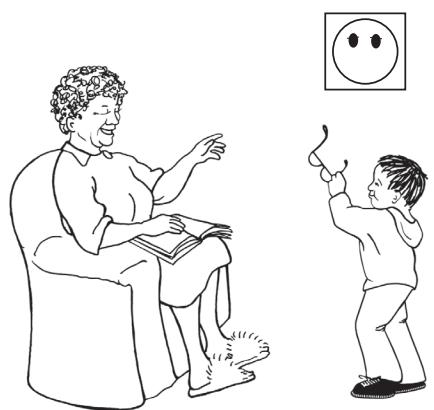
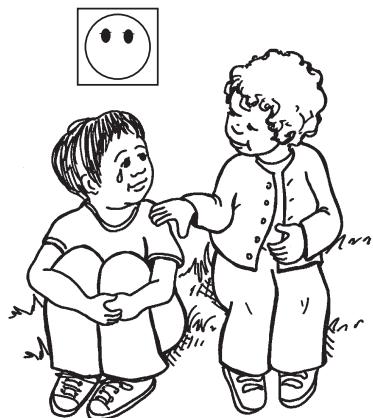
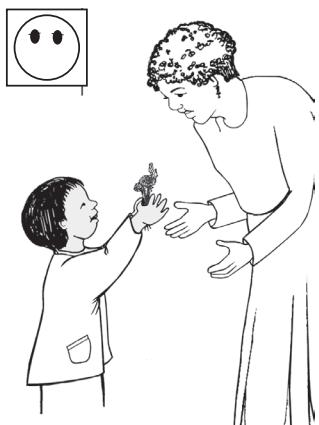




Blessing Moments

God gives us gifts of love that we call blessings.

There are many ways that we can be a blessing to others. Draw your happy face in the boxes beside the pictures of things you would like to do to be a blessing to others.



ACTIVITY