Primary children from the Lubbock Texas North Stake, USA, collected 887 handprints with their acts of service written on them. Then two artists from the stake made this beautiful nativity. Look closely to see the hands! The stake invited people to come see it, and more than 4,500 people attended. The children learned that by helping others, they felt closer to our Savior.

Here’s what some of the children had to say:

Service to me means to do jobs for people who are in need of help. It reminds me of Jesus when He did all His miracles to help people.

Logan S., age 9

Giving service helps me feel closer to the Lord.

Avery B., age 10

When I do something good, it makes my heart feel warm.

That’s when I feel my Savior.

Aidan K., age 7

Dear Friends,

This year, we invited you to tell us how you are standing tall by following the Savior. And you did! Thousands of footprints and stories came to our mailbox from all over the world! We read and loved each one. As a Christmas gift to you, we’ve made a video to show some of your footprints and stories. You can watch it at friend.lds.org. Go to page 17 to see some of the footprints!

Merry Christmas!

The Friend

P.S. Watch for a new invitation from the Friend next month!
Primary Connection  Find stories and activities to go with this month’s sharing time theme and lessons.  Find more at lessonhelps.lds.org.

STORIES AND FEATURES

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FJ2  Joel’s Family Christmas Tree
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FJ8  You Can’t Wrap a Horse!

Hidden CTR Rings

Level 1: Wrap it up
Level 2: Icy cold
Level 3: Take a step

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The Friend can be found on the Internet at friend.lds.org.

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There are opportunities all around us to shine every day! Each of us came to earth with the Light of Christ. As we follow the example of the Savior and live as He lived and as He taught, that light will burn within us and will light the way for others. We can be a light in the lives of our family members, friends, classmates, people we just met, or even total strangers. There are around us those who are lonely, those who are sick, and those who feel discouraged. We can help them and lift their spirits. The Savior brought hope to the hopeless and strength to the weak. He healed the sick. He caused the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. He even raised the dead to life. Throughout His ministry He reached out in charity to any in need. As we emulate His example, we will bless lives, including our own.

How comforting are the Savior’s words: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). I testify that He is our Savior and Redeemer, our Exemplar and our strength. He is “the light which shineth in darkness” (D&C 6:21). I pray that each of us may promise to follow Him and become a shining light to the world.

Adapted from “Be an Example and a Light,” October 2015 general conference.

Watch Christmas videos all month long at Mormon.org!
**SHINE LIKE JESUS**

Jesus asked us to love and serve others. Match the picture of Him with the scripture that describes the story. Then match those to the picture of how you can follow Jesus’s example!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jesus Fed the Hungry</th>
<th>John 8:3–9</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Prayed</td>
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<td>Jesus Taught Others</td>
<td>John 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Was a Peacemaker</td>
<td>Matthew 14:15–21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Christmas star led the Wise Men to Jesus. How can you follow His light this month? Visit Mormon.org for some ideas!
A Tree for Travis

Jacqueline had a great idea—but could she pull it off?

By Charlotte Mae Sheppard
(Based on a true story)

"Tis love we get when love we bring"
(Children's Songbook, 138).

Jacqueline's family talked and laughed as they walked through the snow-dusted woods. But behind them, Jacqueline quietly trudged with the speed of a melting snowman.

She had waited all year for her family's Christmas-tree hunt. She had dreamed about crunching through the frosty forest, sipping hot cocoa, and decorating the perfect tree until every branch sparkled with lights.

But now the frost she had waited for was freezing her toes, and the hot cocoa in her thermos didn't taste as sweet as usual. She kept thinking about Travis.

Travis was Jacqueline's best friend. He used to have a house near hers, but this winter his family had to move into a small trailer. The move had been really hard for Travis. There wasn't even enough room for a Christmas tree in their new place. And Travis loved Christmas trees!

Suddenly Jacqueline stopped. Popping up from the snow in front of her was a tiny pine sapling. Maybe it would fit in Travis's new home! Jacqueline's eyes lit up as she reached for it—

"Whoa!" Dad said, putting a mittened hand on her shoulder. "We can't cut down the little trees. They need to grow for next year."

As Dad continued through the forest, Jacqueline looked back at the sapling and smiled. She had an idea.

Hours later Jacqueline was walking through the snow again—but this time in her own backyard. From where she stood, she could just glimpse her family's Christmas tree twinkling through the windows of their house. Their tree hunt was over, but hers wasn't quite finished.

She walked next to the towering trees that marked the edge of her yard until she saw a pine branch growing low enough to reach. It was just the right size for Travis's trailer. Dad had told her that taking one small branch wouldn't hurt the tree too much.

With a grunt Jacqueline broke off the branch. But it didn't look at all like the Christmas tree twinkling inside. Making Travis's tree was going to be harder than she thought!

The next day Jacqueline sat in the car and watched the forest rush by in a blur of brown and green.

"Aren't you excited to give Travis his tree?" Mom asked. Jacqueline shrugged. She had spent all day trying to make the little tree look just right, but it didn't end up nearly as nice as she wanted.

They parked in front of Travis's trailer, and Jacqueline opened the trunk. When she saw the tree, her heart sank. It was lopsided, with needles drooping from its branches. Even the ribbons Jacqueline had tied around it were crumpled. Hot tears stung at the corner of Jacqueline's eyes. It looked nothing like a real Christmas tree. It would probably just make Travis's Christmas worse!

The door to the trailer swung open, and Travis bounded down the steps. With a deep breath, Jacqueline held out the tree. "Merry Christmas!" she said shakily.

When Travis saw the tree, a grin spread across his face. "Wow! It's perfect!" he cried out. "Thank you!"

Jacqueline felt a warm feeling grow inside her, melting away the sad and worried feelings she'd had before. She realized that her gift wasn't really the tree or the ribbons—so it didn't matter if those were perfect or not. What she had really given Travis was love. Like Jesus would have done.

And she couldn't wait to give it again. ♦

The author lives in California, USA.
“If we do the best we can, the Lord will bless us.”

President Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Here are some fun FHE ideas from this month’s magazine. What other ideas can you come up with?

**Winter Lemonade**

“When life gives you lemons, make lemonade!”

Try making this winter lemonade recipe! Be sure to get an adult’s help.

- **5 cups hot water**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1 orange, cut into 4 pieces**
- **5 whole cloves**
- **1 cup fresh lemon juice (about 4 lemons)**

1. Boil half of the water and stir in the sugar until dissolved. Remove from heat.
2. Stir in the cinnamon, ginger, orange slices, and cloves. Cover and let sit for 30 minutes.
3. Strain the liquid from the pan into a large pitcher. Stir in the lemon juice and the rest of the hot water. Serve warm.

**TERRIFIC TREES**

Read “A Tree for Travis” on page 4. Make these trees to give away as Christmas gifts. What other ways can you be like Jesus and show love to your friends? Go to Mormon.org this month for some ideas!

- 1 pinecone for each tree
- green paint
- paintbrushes
- craft glue
- small square of cardboard
- plastic beads or old plastic jewelry

1. Paint each pinecone green.
2. After the paint has dried, glue the pinecone stem-side-down onto the cardboard square. Let it dry.
3. Decorate the trees by gluing beads or pieces of plastic jewelry onto the “branches.”

We have some ideas for gifts anyone can give. And they’re free! Look on page 38.

Is there a topic you’d like to learn about with your family? Go to lessonhelps.lds.org to find stories, activities, and media.
DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT
What can you do when something doesn’t go the way you planned?
• Look for things to be grateful for. The more you look, the more you’ll find!
• Remember that Heavenly Father and Jesus always love you.
• Don’t be afraid to try again.
• Some situations are out of your control, but you can always pray to Heavenly Father for help and comfort.

TASTY TREATS
Try these for FHE this month!
• Top snack crackers with cottage cheese and sprinkle with paprika.
• Drizzle plain popcorn with melted white chocolate and top with sprinkles.
• Wrap cheese sticks in slices of ham or salami.

MORE FHE IDEAS
Look for these pictures in the magazine to find the stories and articles they go with! (Find the page numbers below.)

IDEA 1: Get ready for Christmas with the Christmas advent calendar! Read about how people in the Book of Mormon and Bible learned about Jesus Christ’s birth. Take turns reading the scriptures together each night.

IDEA 2: Does your family have any special traditions on Sunday? Read “Sharing Traditions” and “Happy Sabbath” and talk about how you can share your Sunday traditions. Write and tell us about it!

IDEA 3: Have a journal challenge! Read “My Not-So-Great-Sixth-Grade Year” and use the prompts at the end to write or draw in your journal. Help each other write 10 “about you” facts for each person.
“We a gift before thee lay” (Children’s Songbook, 39).

Tyler held the church door open, and Mom hurried inside. They were late for the ward Christmas party, so Tyler could only glance at the new Christmas tree in the foyer. But there was something different about the tree. It didn’t have any lights. Or lots of ornaments. Instead there were little papers hanging from the branches.

If the tree in the foyer had gifts, Tyler wanted first pick.
“Welcome,” said the bishop from the front of the room. “Before we start our program, I have a special announcement . . .”

Tyler’s little sister, Rose, started fussing, so Tyler leaned down to help her. Over the noise, Tyler thought he heard the bishop say something like “the Getting Tree” and “take a tag.” If the tree in the foyer had gifts, Tyler wanted first pick. While everyone else watched the program, Tyler slipped away before the end.

Carefully Tyler lifted a paper off a branch. The first tag read, _Girl: Winter coat—Size 5_. He put it back. The next read, _Grocery Gift Card_. Tyler worried they might all be boring gifts. But then he found just the right one. _Boy: Big Whirl Helicopter_. He stuffed the tag in his pocket and raced to find Mom.

“There you are,” Mom said. “It’s almost time to leave.”

“OK,” said Tyler. “But first, I picked this from the Getting Tree. How do I get my helicopter?”

“Oh, honey,” said Mom. “It’s not the Getting Tree. It’s the Giving Tree. The tags are gifts for families in need.”

Tyler’s cheeks burned. He wanted to put the tag back, but other people had gathered around the tree. After church tomorrow, when no one was looking, he would put it back.

The next day Tyler’s Primary teacher told about the Wise Men who brought gifts to Jesus. “What could you give Jesus for Christmas?” she asked.

Tyler closed his fingers around the gift tag in his pocket. He didn’t feel embarrassed anymore. He felt like he wanted to give. The only problem was he didn’t have gold, frankincense, or myrrh. But maybe he could earn some money for a Big Whirl Helicopter.

As soon as Tyler got home, he dumped the money from his piggy bank on the bed. He had $2.47—not enough. He asked Mom if he could do chores for money, but she said, “Not on Sunday.” The gift had to be turned in by next week. Could he earn the money in time?

While he thought, Rose brought him the _Friend_ magazine. As Tyler read to her, he saw the answer to his problem. The _Friend_ had a story about kids running a hot-chocolate stand to earn money to donate.

“Mom?” Tyler asked. “Could I set up a cocoa stand tomorrow?”

“Maybe. Why?” Mom asked.

“To earn money for the Giving Tree present.”

Mom gave him a hug. “Sure. I’ll help you.”

The next day Tyler put a table and chairs outside. Mom boiled water, and Tyler mixed in the cocoa. Rose even helped by holding a sign. By the end of the afternoon, Tyler’s nose was cold and his fingers felt stiff, but he had enough money for the Big Whirl Helicopter.

Tyler felt happy all the way to the store. He smiled as he wrapped the gift and dropped it off to the bishop. He knew now it was called the Giving Tree, but the feeling he had inside was like a special gift too. At least in that way, it really was the Getting Tree.

◆

The author lives in Oregon, USA.
**Hink Pink Think**

A *hink pink* is a pair of rhyming words that match a definition. See if you can solve these. The first one's been done for you. Check your answers on page 39.

A place to buy the stuff you walk on in your home floor *store*

A cart for carrying winged, fire-breathing creatures

Something that likes to eat flies and hop down the street

A light red place for washing dishes

Sweets that you accidentally drop onto the beach

A primary-colored liquid for sticking things together

A place to get a drink of water at the top of a huge hill

More than 25%, but less than 75%, of a chuckle

---

**What’s the Question?**

Pretend somebody said this to you: "The answer is 10. What’s a question that would match that answer?" You could come up with all kinds of questions that work: 7+3, 5+5, or 12-2 are only a few of them.

Now try this one. The answer is, “a school desk that’s also a spaceship.”

What’s the question for that answer? Send your favorite question to the *Friend* if you want to share.

---

**MIXED-UP STOCKINGS**

There are 25 Christmas stockings on this page. Can you find the 12 pairs? Can you find the one without a match?
During this holiday season, I’m reminded of a story about my grandma that my mom has shared with us many times.

It was Christmas Eve, and my mom was about 12 years old. She and her mom and sisters were traveling across town to visit family, and it was raining hard outside. Grandma had a tradition of making plates upon plates of Christmas goodies for family friends and loved ones. The car was full, traffic was crazy, and everyone was trying to rush home for the holidays or get their last-minute shopping done.

In the middle of it all was a homeless man with a shopping cart full of cans. He started to cross the street at a red light, and all of a sudden the whole cart fell over. Cans were everywhere! It seemed as though the chaos of Christmas went silent. My mom wondered why no one was helping. An outburst of horns began to honk, as if to tell the man to get out of the way.

To my mom’s surprise, her mom got out of the car and quickly began helping the man pick up his cans. Then other people followed. It was pouring rain, and my grandma was wet when she returned to the car. As they sat in the backed-up traffic, my aunts, mom, and grandma all had a wonderful idea to rush out of the car and give the man a plate of Christmas goodies. In that moment, as my grandma gave the man the Christmas gift, my mom’s heart was touched with the reminder of the true meaning of Christmas.

I am grateful for the courage and love my grandma had to go help that man so long ago. I hope that I can show that same love to my family and to those I meet.
How can I feel closer to the Savior?

We can know that the Savior is nearby all the time. We can remember Him when we take the sacrament.

We can picture the stable in Bethlehem where He was born.

We can remember how He suffered for us so we can be forgiven.
Meet Elder Dale G. Renlund

Elder Renlund was born in November 1952. His mother was from Sweden, and his father was from Finland.

When Dale was almost 11, his family moved from Utah, USA, to Finland and Sweden for three years.

After high school, Dale was called to serve a mission in Sweden.

Dale met Ruth Lybbert while attending college. They were married in the Salt Lake Temple in 1977 while he was studying to become a heart doctor.

The Renlunds have a daughter, Ashley.

In 2009 he was called to serve in an Area Presidency in Africa for five years.

He has been an Apostle since October 2015.

WHAT IS AN APOSTLE?

When Jesus was on the earth, He called 12 men to be His special helpers and witnesses. They were called Apostles. He has called Apostles to be His special helpers and witnesses today. They testify of Jesus Christ to the whole world. Elder Renlund is an Apostle.
I live in India with my family.
I got to plan a special Christmas activity
for my school and share the gospel
with my friends!

**Young Missionaries**
My Primary leaders teach that we should be missionaries. Sometimes I invite my friends to church. Most of the time, they say no. I thought that maybe I was too young to be a missionary.

**A Family Challenge**
Then, at family home evening, Dad challenged our family to invite one person to church every month. I wanted to do it, but it was tough! I asked Dad for help. He said I could pray. So I did.

**Hi! My name is Blessy!**
BLESSY’S TIPS FOR STANDING TALL

- Pray for help.
- Invite people to come to church, even if you think they’ll say no.
- Remember that Heavenly Father will help you.

The Idea

The next day at school, the principal asked for ideas for a school Christmas activity. I had a great idea! I told her that all the Primary-age kids could come visit my church. She called my parents, and they talked to the bishop to plan the activity. Our Primary leaders and the missionaries helped too.

An Exciting Day

Soon the day arrived. I felt nervous and excited at the same time. When Dad took me to school, I saw everyone was there and ready to go. Almost 500 students and teachers came!

Together at Church

At the church we watched a video about Jesus Christ’s birth. The young adults and missionaries sang Christmas songs. The bishop and my dad gave talks about how Jesus loves children and about loving one another. I gave a talk about Christmas. Everyone had a great time! My principal and my teacher even asked the missionaries questions.
Hidden Picture

Happy Christmas! These children invited some friends to help act out a nativity scene.
Can you find the hidden objects?
Thanks for Standing Tall!

This year thousands of you told us how you are standing tall for the Savior. Here are just a few of your footprints. Watch a “Standing Tall!” video at friend.lds.org to see more! And look for a new challenge for 2017 in next month’s Friend.

Katie C., age 12, Iowa, USA

Sonny S., age 5, Washington, USA

Ariel S., age 8, Washington, USA

Hezekiah V., age 8, Colorado, USA

Leila P., age 5, Louisiana, USA

Annie W., age 10, Ohio, USA

Aleysha I., age 11, Victoria, Australia

Jake W., age 3, Ohio, USA

Kelly S., age 8, Victoria, Australia

Alexis T., age 11, Victoria, Australia

In a pledge to stand tall, I will read the Scriptures daily, even though I might find it hard. I will stand tall and do it because I know that the right thing to do.

Leila P. Spends time to always include all children no matter how tall they are.

I will stand tall by not participating in bad social media.

I will stand tall by... Inviting people to church.

I will stand tall by... having a positive attitude.

I stand tall by... making friends with outcasts.
It would be hard not seeing Mom, but Christmas could still be good.

“It is serving I am blessed. In giving I receive” (Children’s Songbook, 74).

It was almost Christmas, but Diego wasn’t feeling very excited. This was the first Christmas since his parents got divorced. And nothing felt the same. He and his brother, Samuel, wouldn’t even get to see Mom this Christmas.

“Everything’s different,” Diego said to Dad.

“I know.” Dad’s eyes were sad. “Sometimes things change before they get better.”

He was quiet for a bit, then smiled. “Christmas will be different this year, but that doesn’t mean we won’t have some good times. We’ll still be celebrating the birth of the Savior.”

Diego nodded. It would be hard not seeing Mom, but maybe Christmas could still be good, just like Dad said. Diego wanted to help make this Christmas a happy one.

He went to his room to think. Sometimes for Christmas they did a family service project. What could they do this year?

Diego looked around his room. He saw a toy car he didn’t play with
One day I went to the store to do a “sub for Santa” for a six-year-old girl. We bought a doll and two outfits. When we were done, I felt the Spirit. I said that next year, we should do a boy and a girl. I hope we do!

Sydney S., age 9, Utah, USA

December 2016
Moroni wrote on the golden plates about the priesthood, the sacrament, and baptism. He challenged us to read the Book of Mormon and ask Heavenly Father if it’s true. If we pray and listen for the answer, the Holy Ghost can tell us it’s true. When Moroni finished writing, he buried the plates in the ground to keep them safe.

I have been reading my scriptures with my dad every day. It is helping me get a testimony. I will not give up.

Spencer P., age 10, Wisconsin, USA

Jacob D., age 11, Nova Scotia, Canada

Memorize Moroni 10:4–5.

Follow Moroni’s challenge! Pray for the Holy Ghost to help you know that the Book of Mormon is true.

Visit scripturestories.lds.org to watch videos 53–54 of the Book of Mormon stories.

I challenge myself to…
This Month’s Scriptures
After you read a scripture passage, color the matching numbered areas on the nativity!

1 1 Nephi 11:14–28
2 2 Nephi 19:6
3 Mosiah 15:1–4
4 Alma 5:48
5 3 Nephi 9:15
6 Matthew 1:19–25
7 Matthew 2:7–11
8 Luke 1:27–31

Picture a Stable
When Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem, the only place they could find to stay was a stable, where animals were kept. Jesus Christ was born in the stable and laid in a manger. Shepherds and Wise Men followed a star to find Jesus. The Nephites also saw this star and knew that Jesus had been born. We celebrate Christmas to remember His birth.

You can print more copies at Friend2016BOM.lds.org.
We hope you’ve learned a lot this year about making Sunday a special day to focus on and learn about Jesus. Here are some ways children like you keep the Sabbath day holy. Write to us at the *Friend* and tell us how your family makes Sunday special!

**When it is warm enough,**

Elizabeth M., age 10,
Utah, USA,
likes going on walks with her family after church to visit her grandma.

**One winter Sunday morning,**

it was cold and icy, and it had snowed the night before. We were debating whether or not to go to church. We decided to go. While listening to the talks, I felt the Spirit stronger than ever before. I was very happy that we went to church that day, and I know why I felt what was right. And I also helped my dad to choose the right. Good choices help me feel the Holy Ghost.

Annabell K.,
age 10,
Maryland, USA

**One winter Sunday morning,**

it was cold and icy, and it had snowed the night before. We were debating whether or not to go to church. We decided to go. While listening to the talks, I felt the Spirit stronger than ever before. I was very happy that we went to church that day, and I know why I felt the Spirit. It was because this was the first time I actually listened to the talks. I felt very happy, calm, and humble.

Annabell K.,
age 10,
Maryland, USA

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**ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHYLLIS POLLEMA-CAHILL**

This Sunday, let’s read President Monson’s message on page 2.

And watch the Christmas videos!
For many years Book of Mormon prophets like Nephi and Samuel taught that Jesus would come to save His people. Far away across the ocean, shepherds and Wise Men traveled to Bethlehem to see the baby Jesus.

Carefully lift the staples and take out pages 24–25. Starting on December 1st, read the scriptures for each night. Then cut, fold, and tape the strip of paper down. On Christmas Eve you’ll see the sign that people everywhere saw on the night Jesus was born!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEC 1</th>
<th>1 Nephi 11:14-15</th>
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<tr>
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<td>DEC 4</td>
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<td>DEC 2</td>
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<td>DEC 7</td>
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<td>Luke 2:8-9</td>
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<td>Helaman 14:1-5</td>
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<td>DEC 8</td>
<td>Luke 2:1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC 3</td>
<td>1 Nephi 11:24, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC 12</td>
<td>Luke 2:13-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Samuel Tells of the Baby Jesus

1. Said Samuel, “Within five years A night will be as day, And
2. Across the sea, in Bethlehem, Lord Jesus came to earth As

Baby Jesus will be born In a land far, far away.”
Samuel had prophesied, And angels sang His birth.

Hosanna! Hosanna! Oh, let us gladly sing. How

blessed that our Lord was born; Let earth receive her King!
Darla’s mittens and boots had barely dried when she sat down on the rug to put them back on. She could hardly wait to go sledding again!

Sledding in the park with her friends was Darla’s favorite thing about winter. The round, snowy hills were perfect for sledding.

But now that Darla and her friends were getting older, they wanted to try the bigger hills at the park instead. They were ready for The Hill. It was the biggest, slipperiest hill in the whole park. And for Darla, it was also off-limits.

“I’ve already heard of at least two kids getting hurt on that hill this year,” Mom said when Darla asked to go sledding on The Hill. “That’s why one of our family rules is that we don’t sled on it.”

When The Hill got icy, sleds got harder to control. Kids crashed into the fence at the bottom and got hurt.

“But, Mom, by the time you get to the bottom, you’re going so slow you can just roll off before you get to the fence,” Darla said.

But Mom wasn’t changing her mind. Darla headed outside to meet up with her friends.

“Let’s go down The Hill!” Sasha said.

Darla’s stomach squirmed. “How about we just stay on the small hills?” she said. “My mom says I can’t go down that one.”

“Why not? The other hills are too boring,” said Emily. She started toward The Hill. “Come on.”

Darla looked up at The Hill. It really did look fun. And she’d be careful! But then she looked down at the fence at the bottom. Darla sighed. She knew Mom wanted her to be safe.

Sasha and Emily were already walking to The Hill.

“I guess I’d better head home,” Darla called after them. “OK,” Sasha called back. “But you’re missing out!”

Maybe she was missing out, Darla thought as she dragged her sled home.

“What happened?” Mom asked when Darla walked back inside.

“Sasha and Emily wanted to sled down The Hill,” she said with a frown. “I told them I couldn’t, and I asked them to stay on the smaller hills. But they still went, so I came home.”

Mom hugged Darla. “Thanks for being obedient,” she said. “I bet that was hard.”

Darla’s shoulders slumped. “Yeah. I was really excited to go sledding.”

“I know,” Mom said. “Obeying family rules isn’t always easy, but I’m really proud of you for choosing the right. I bet you were listening to the Holy Ghost.”

Darla nodded. She did feel good about her choice, even though it was hard.

Mom’s words helped warm her up inside. And that reminded her.

“How about some hot chocolate? Maybe we can invite Sasha and Emily over for some when they get back!”

The author lives in Utah, USA.

I will stand tall by obeying my parents all the time.

Isaac C., age 5, Nebraska, USA
What was so dangerous about The Hill?
I grew up in Hawaii, USA. People from all over the world lived there. I had friends from lots of countries. I learned a lot from them about their traditions.

My Japanese friends taught me how to eat with chopsticks. They also taught me to take my shoes off at the front door. We always did this at our school.

Your family may have their own traditions. These are special activities your family shares. Sharing our traditions with others is like sharing the gospel. It makes us feel happy, warm, and loved.

In the gospel, we have commandments. They are kind of like traditions. But they are much more important because they are from Heavenly Father. We live the Word of Wisdom so our bodies can be healthy and strong. We keep the Sabbath day holy. And we take the sacrament to remember Jesus and how He died for our sins.

Other gospel traditions are reading the scriptures, praying, and having family home evening. These things bring us closer to our families. They help us choose the right. They teach us that Heavenly Father loves us.

Not everyone has the same traditions we do, but we can still share Heavenly Father’s love with them. There is a Primary song about sharing and love. It can help us to remember to share our Heavenly Father’s love with others. “As I have loved you, love one another. This new commandment: love one another. By this shall men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (Children’s Songbook, 136).
Heavenly Father’s Family

God gives His love and goodness to everyone. We can learn a lot of good from others, and we can share a lot of good too. Everyone belongs in Heavenly Father’s family.

How can you learn from and share with others? Use the words below to fill in the blanks:

Ask a friend about their family ________________.
Focus on what you have in ________________.
Share your favorite ________________ with a friend.
Make a friend’s favorite ________________ together.
Invite a friend to a ________________ activity.
Smile or say ________________ to someone new.
Write a ________________ for a friend about something you learned from them.
Invite a friend’s ________________ to family ________________ evening.

Use the word list to fill in the blanks. (Hint: count letters and find the spaces that match.)

family
scripture
common
hello
food
Primary
note
home
traditions
Christmas Story

Christmas is when we give to others. We spend time with our siblings, fathers, and mothers. It’s all about Jesus’s birth. People rejoice all over the earth. Jesus’s life was the right way to live, and now we honor His birth with presents to give. Heavenly Father gave His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the Righteous and Holy One.

Megan J., age 11, Utah, USA

After we made Christmas crackers and filled them with some of our Halloween candy, we took them to a nursing home and gave them to the people who live there. I felt happy and warm inside.

Abigail C., age 5, Pennsylvania, USA

One fast Sunday I felt something say, “Go bear your testimony!” And right when that feeling hit me, I knew it was the Holy Ghost. And instead of having a nervous feeling, I felt courage! And so bearing my testimony wasn’t so bad!

Saione T., age 9, Utah, USA

I live with my grandparents, so everybody comes over to our house. When it snows, my cousins and I like to make snow forts. We like to have fun as a family!

Pypper M., age 9, New Hampshire, USA

I feel the Holy Ghost when I sing “Stars Were Gleaming.” It makes me feel warm inside.

Andrew T., age 7, California, USA

These Primary children in Italy made a Christmas tree out of handprints to celebrate Christmas!
To help us remember the true meaning of Christmas, I made a nativity for my family.

Victoria G., age 10, Missouri, USA

A new family moved into our branch as refugees from a country where there was a war. We live where there are very cold winters, and I was able to give my coat to my new friend.

Erik S., age 11, Primorsky Krai, Russia

I taught my friend who lives across the street about the birth of Jesus.

Megan B., age 10, California, USA

“A Child Is Born,” by Sophia M., age 7, Honduras

Miles T., age 10, Idaho, USA

Alicia T., age 5, Pennsylvania, USA

STANDING TALL

Go to page 17 to see some great footprints!
Sometimes it felt better just to write about it in my journal.

My Not-So-Great Sixth-Grade Year
September 9—Today wasn’t the best. I didn’t have anyone to sit by at lunch. I missed an easy question on the geography quiz. Also our team lost at kickball. Sometimes I wonder if I’ll ever have any friends at this school.

I wish we hadn’t moved here. I don’t have anyone to talk to. That’s why I’m starting a journal. People in books always seem to have journals. I’ve heard stories from pioneers’ journals. I don’t know if I’ll ever do anything amazing, but it’s nice to talk to someone. Hope I can keep this up! Gotta go.

Mom’s calling me for dinner.

P.S. I do feel a little better now.

I closed my journal and went to set the table.

The next day was just as bad. When I came home, I felt like I might explode. Instead I went to my room, opened my journal, and started writing. I dumped all those feelings out. I felt better this time too. After that, I wrote every few days. I wrote about everything. It was like I was writing my own book!

October 21—Guess what? I made a friend! Her name is Claire, and she’s new too. We both like board games, and we don’t like geography. I think I’m going to invite her over for family game night on Friday.

I love my journal. I like writing when I feel mad or worried because it makes me feel better. I also like writing about the good things that happen because then I can remember them.

Guess what else? I have a book report due next week. Wish me luck!

Little by little things started getting better. I still got picked last for kickball, but I had a few friends, and I joined the math team. I wrote about all of it. Soon I wasn’t writing just to complain, I was writing to a good friend—me!

And before I knew it, sixth grade was over. When I came home from the class party, I had quite a few signatures in my yearbook—all from new friends I had made. I pulled out my journal, plopped down on my bed, and wrote my last entry as a sixth grader.

June 15—Today was the last day of sixth grade. Next year I’ll be in seventh grade! I’m nervous about that, but I know I can write when I get scared or when I feel like everything is going wrong. I just went back and read my first entry again. It was so sad that I almost laughed! I’m glad I have it.

It shows how much I’ve grown up this year! I’m glad I’m not so angry or sad anymore.

When we moved here, I felt like I would never be happy again. But now when I read my journal, I can see how much Heavenly Father has blessed me. He helped me make new friends and learn hard things. I wonder what’s going to happen next year! ◆

The author lives in Texas, USA.

NOT SURE WHAT TO WRITE? TRY THIS!

- What made you smile today? Write about it!
- Write a letter to your future self.
- Write about your favorite place in the world.
- Write three blessings you are grateful for.
- Write 10 facts about you.

Look for a new prompt each month starting in January!
When I Grow Up, I Want to Be . . .

By Linda Davies

When I Grow Up, I Want to Be . . .

1. What do you like to do? Do you like taking care of animals, working on computers, or dancing? The things you like are clues about the talents you have.

2. Talk to a grown-up. Talk to a parent or teacher about your talents and interests. They can help you find more information.

3. Get curious. Talk to people who do interesting jobs. Ask about what they do, what education they needed, and why they love their jobs. Find books or information online about different jobs too.

4. Experiment! As you get older, take classes in school to learn more about what you love. Try new subjects too! Maybe you could go to work with someone for a day to watch and learn. This is called job shadowing.

5. Learn about lots of things. Lots of kids don’t know yet what they’d like to do when they grow up. That’s OK. Learn lots of skills and subjects like science, cooking, baby-sitting, or sports.

6. Watch and learn. When you grow up, you can also be a mom or dad. Have you thought about the kind of mom or dad you’d want to be? Watch the parents around you to see what you want to do when you’re a parent.

7. Pray for help. When Joseph Smith was only 14, he had lots of questions too. This scripture helped him, and it can help you: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him” (James 1:5). God cares about the questions that matter to us.

What do you want to be when you grow up? Here are some ideas to get you started. You could even write about these in your journal!
Christmas Party

- Who looks like they’re learning how to wrap presents for the first time? Who do you think has already had some practice?

- Which crafts do you think will take the longest to make? If you were there, what would you do to make your own crafts extra special?

- What things in this party remind you of Jesus’s birth? How do you keep Jesus in your heart at Christmas?
You got a gift for Stretch? For a rubber chicken? He needed a new leash.

Everybody needs a gift!

Yeah, I wish I could afford a present for everyone I know.

There are great gifts you can give that don’t cost any money.

Like friendship?

Or kindness!

Loving.

Forgiving.

Sharing the gospel.

They’re all free!

Speaking of gifts—YOU are a gift.

To your family and to everyone around you. And we are thankful for you.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
How to Write to the Friend
To send us a letter, drawing, poem, or footprint…
1. Fill out the form below and send it in with your story or artwork.
2. Send a school picture or other high-resolution photo.
3. We might edit your submission for length or clarity, and we can’t return it to you.
4. You must be at least three years old.

Please send your submission to:
Friend Magazine
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2393
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024
Or email: friend@ldschurch.org

The following information and permission must be included:

First and last name
Age      Boy/Girl      State/Province, 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
Email of parent or legal guardian

May the Friend contact you with a survey?
■ Yes  ■ No
When you say, “Story time!” does your little one come running to hear a good book? Reading is a great way to teach children. So is telling true stories, using your own memories instead of pages.

Telling family stories helps children feel loved and secure. It shows them that you’ve been their age and can empathize. Most of all, family stories show meaning in life, preparing children to navigate their own unfolding stories with confidence.

Here are some more ways you can use stories to engage your little ones:

- Tell true stories while cleaning up, sitting around a fire, or riding in the car.
- Tell a bedtime story about your child’s day. This will show your little one you noticed what was important to him or her.
- This Christmas season, gather around the tree and say, “Once upon a time, when I was little . . .” or, “Once upon a time, when you were a baby . . .”
- Tell stories by decorating a Christmas memory tree, like Joel and his family did (see page FJ2).

You can read past letters at FriendFPLO.lds.org.
“Remember Him, as you picture Christmas this year.”
—Children’s Songbook, 50
“This was Grandma’s,” Joel said. “She always had a treat for me.”

“This was my Aunt Lizzy’s,” said Mommy. “She always made me laugh!”

“Grandpa taught me how to whistle,” Sarah said.

“I made this in Primary last year!” said Joel.

“This was on our first Christmas tree,” Daddy said. “It’s like the star the Wise Men followed.”

“I love our family Christmas tree!” everyone said.
Make Your Own Ornament!

Here’s an ornament you can make with your family.

**Child:** Color the picture of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus.

**Mommy or Daddy:** Glue this page to heavy paper and cut out the pieces. Then cut the doors open and glue the picture behind the doors. Read Luke 2:8–16 together.

Moroni was the son of Mormon. His father gave him the golden plates to write on.

Moroni wrote down the sacrament prayers. He wrote that everything good comes from God.
Moroni wrote that Jesus loves all children. He said we can pray to have love in our hearts.

Moroni made a special promise. He wrote that if we read the Book of Mormon and ask God, the Holy Ghost will tell us it is true. Then Moroni buried the plates in the Hill Cumorah to keep them safe.
Many years later Moroni came to earth as an angel. He showed Joseph Smith where the golden plates were buried. God blessed Joseph with the power to translate the words on the plates. Today we can read Moroni’s words in the Book of Mormon!
I Love My Family

ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT
Let’s talk about gifts.

I love gifts!

They’re fun to get, but it’s also nice to give them.

There are gifts you can’t wrap. Can you think of some of those?

I know! A horse!

What about an elephant?

Those would be hard to wrap!

What about other gifts? When you help clean up, can you wrap that?
No. Is it still a gift?

Sure! What other gifts could you give?

I can invite my friend Eva to Primary. Is that a good gift?

I can give Papa a hug when he comes home. I can’t wrap that!

No, but it’s a great gift.

Yes! Can you think of a gift that Heavenly Father gave to all of us?

I don’t know. What is it?

That’s the best gift of all!

Our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**QUESTION FOR YOU** How is Jesus a gift to us?