

THE *Friend*



Count Down
to
CHRISTMAS

See pages 24-25

FRIENDS BY MAIL

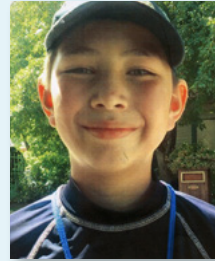
My Nativity Collage

When I saw the star on the front cover of the December 2016 *Friend*, I wanted to share it, so I decided to cut out pictures of the Nativities and make my own.

Sophie R., age 10, Oregon, USA



A Tree for Travis

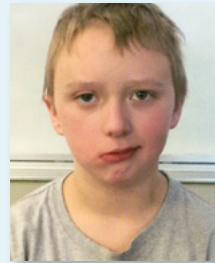


I liked that Jacqueline wanted to get a Christmas tree for Travis in the story “A Tree for Travis” (Dec. 2016). This story reminds me to share with my siblings.

Alex A., age 11, Washington, USA



Building a Temple



I love seeing the pictures of the Payson Utah Temple being built (Jan.–Dec. 2017). It makes me want to go to every temple in the world and see how cool they are. The stained-glass picture was my favorite!

Dalton B., age 9, Alaska, USA

Filling the World with Love

Here's what we did for Christmas!
Samuel, Joshua, and Hope W., ages 8, 6, and 7, Utah, USA



DEAR FRIENDS,

One reason we give Christmas presents is to remember the gift of Heavenly Father and His Son. They love us so much. And we can show how much we love Them by being kind to others. You are a gift to the world too. Your life is a blessing to those around you. Thank you for being our friend!

Happy Christmas,
The Friend

Was there a story or activity this month that helped you? Tell us about it! Turn to page 39 to find out how.

THE *Friend*

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

◆ **Primary Connection** Find stories and activities to go with this month's sharing time theme and lessons.
Find more at lessonhelps.lds.org.

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Front cover by Andrew Bosley
Back cover by Apryl Stott

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Hidden GTR Rings

Hard: Do you wear mittens or gloves?

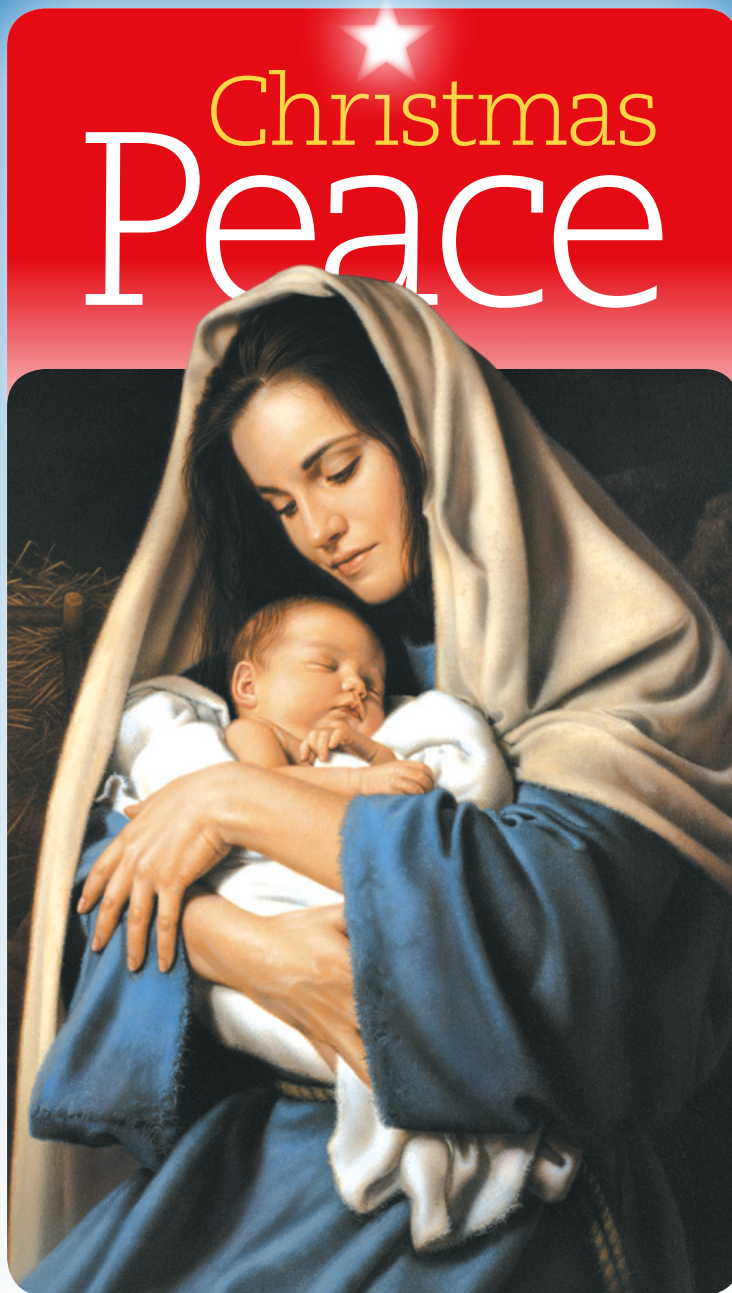
Harder: Have a cookie!

Hardest: Snowy sliding



By President Henry B. Eyring

First Counselor in the First Presidency



Every Christmas season, I remember the words: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: . . . and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

The first time I can remember hearing those words was as I sat in the balcony of the Salt Lake Tabernacle. A choir was singing the music of **Handel**. I remember feeling something in my heart. It was the Holy Ghost. The Spirit **confirmed** to my heart that the words I heard sung that night were true.

The baby born in Bethlehem long ago was and is the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father.

The feeling I had that night was of faith and hope.

a musician who used scriptures about Jesus Christ in his music

said something is true

Because Jesus Christ was born, death would not be the end. Because of His birth, my heart, your heart, and all human hearts can become pure, clean, and fit to go to a heavenly home.

Angels, shepherds, and Wise Men found peace in Jesus Christ. So will you. The Savior's birth is the gift that makes it possible for the






Father to give us "peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come" (D&C 59:23).

I pray that peace will come to each of us as we remember, love, and worship our Heavenly Father. May we always remember the service and kindness Jesus gave—and decide to do the same. ♦

Adapted from "Gifts of Peace," Christmas Devotional 2016.

LET'S GIVE HIM A HANDEL

President Eyring talked about a beautiful piece of music called the *Messiah* by George Frideric Handel. Handel's friend, Charles Jennens, used scriptures to write the words to the music. Here are some sentences from the *Messiah*. Can you fill in the blanks using the Bible verses below? (Answers on page 39.)

-  For unto us a _____ is born.
(Isaiah 9:6, page 873 in the Bible)
-  _____ to God in the highest.
(Luke 2:14, page 1,275)
-  He shall _____ peace.
(Zechariah 9:10, page 1,175)
-  He hath _____ our griefs.
(Isaiah 53:4, page 926)
-  In Christ shall all be made _____.
(1 Corinthians 15:22, page 1,457)



Go to friend.lds.org during December to listen to a beautiful performance of the *Messiah*!



WORSHIPPING CHRIST

Like Handel, you can create something beautiful to show your love for Jesus. Look on the inside front cover to see how Sophie cut out pictures from the *Friend* to create a collage of the Nativity! Show us what you can create!



HALLELUJAH CHORUS

Here's a line of music from one of the most famous parts of the *Messiah* called the "Hallelujah Chorus."

C F C C F C F C F C F G C

Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah.

A SISTER'S Gift

By Jane McBride

(Based on a true story)

"God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Emilie looked out her window at the Arizona desert. Even the spiky plants and shrubs seemed gray and cold this Christmas. It was the end of 1908, a hard year for Emilie's family. Her father was serving a three-year mission in Samoa, a faraway island in the Pacific Ocean.

Emilie knew they would not have presents under the tree this year. Her little sister, Faith, was too young to understand that there was no money for presents. Any extra money Mama earned from selling eggs went to help Papa on his mission.

Emilie turned to Mama. Mama's eyes looked sad and worried.

Was she thinking about Christmas too?

"It's all right, Mama," Emilie said. "I don't need any presents."



Mama smiled, but just a little.

“We won’t have presents,” Mama said. “But we have each other. And we are blessed because Papa is serving Heavenly Father.”

Emilie wrapped her arms around Mama’s waist. “That’s enough for me,” she said.

The day before Christmas, Mama baked cookies using some extra sugar she had bought with egg money.



Emilie and Faith decorated the cookies with raisins and peppermint pieces. They would be delicious Christmas treats! But Emilie knew Faith would still be sad to not have any real presents this year.

As Emilie got ready for bed that night, she picked up her doll, Sarah. Sarah had a beautiful dress and a real china face with painted eyes, nose, and mouth. While Emilie held Sarah, she suddenly had an idea. She loved Sarah. But she loved someone else even more.

Early Christmas morning, Emilie and Faith ran into the front room. Beneath the tree were two plates of cookies, two oranges—and one wrapped package!

Mama picked up the brown paper package. She turned it over in her hands.

“Faith, it has your name on it.”

Faith’s eyes grew wide. Eagerly, she tore open the paper. She stared at the doll, then at Emilie.

“It’s Sarah,” Faith said. “But you love her more than anything.”

Faith started to hand the doll back to Emilie. But Emilie shook her head and hugged her sister instead.

“I love you more.”

Emilie saw Mama wipe tears from her eyes.

“I’m sorry I don’t have anything to give you, Mama,” Emilie said in a small voice.

Mama smiled, and this time her smile was a big one.

“Your gift to Faith is the best present you could have ever given me,” she said, pulling them both into a hug.

Emilie, Faith, and Mama sat down at the kitchen table to enjoy their Christmas treats. Emilie bit into a cookie. She loved the sweet taste, but the warmth that filled her heart was even sweeter. ◆

The author lives in Colorado, USA.

Turn the page for an activity to go with this story!

I read one of my little sisters
her favorite book.

**Elisabeth J., age 9,
Utah, USA**

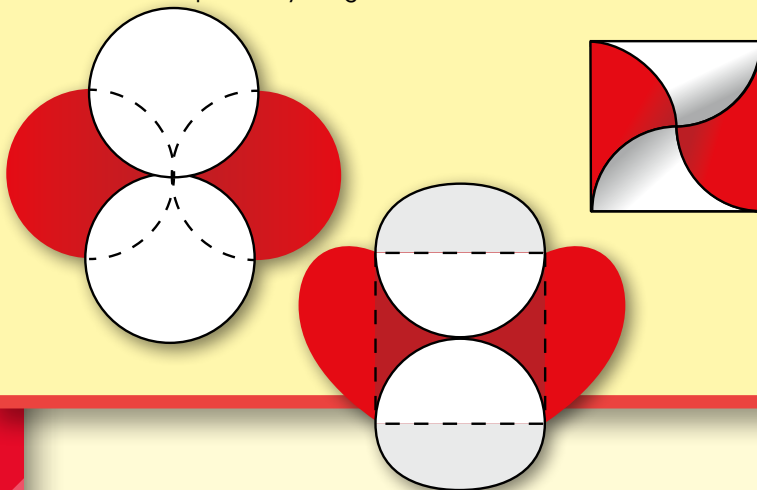


Family Night FUN

A Gift for JESUS

Read “A Sister’s Gift” on page 4. With your family, talk about what makes a gift special. Then try this activity!

1. Use a bowl to trace four circles. Cut them out.
2. Glue the circles together so they meet in the middle.
3. Fold each circle down where the edges meet.
4. Tuck the edges under each other to close the package.
5. You can write a gift you want to give Jesus, like being kind, and put it in your gift box to remember!



Is there a topic you'd like to learn about with your family? Go to lessonhelps.lds.org to find stories, activities, and media.

Here are some family home evening ideas from this month's magazine. What other ideas can you come up with?

Gingerbread People

Make gingerbread people with your family! Use icing to draw a heart on each one so you can remember to share your love this Christmas. Be sure to get an adult's help.

- 1/2 cup softened butter**
- 3/4 cup brown sugar**
- 1/2 cup molasses**
- 2 eggs**
- 3 cups flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon ginger**
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves**

1. In a large bowl, cream the butter and brown sugar. Mix in the molasses and eggs.
2. In a separate bowl, stir the flour, baking soda, salt, and spices together. Add it to the first bowl a little at a time, mixing well.
3. Divide the dough in half and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least two hours.
4. On a floured surface, roll out the dough until it's about 1/4 inch (1 cm) thick. Cut the dough in the shape of people.
5. Bake at 350°F (175°C) for 6–8 minutes. Let the cookies cool. Decorate and enjoy!



THE BEST GIFTS

You've been given lots of gifts. Some are from your family or friends, and some are from Heavenly Father. What are the best gifts you've received? Here are a few ideas. Fill out the rest!

- your body
- love
- your talents: _____
- a favorite toy: _____
- _____
- _____



BONUS TREAT

Try this treat for FHE! Be sure to get an adult's help.

Put thick banana slices, strawberry halves, and pineapple on a skewer to make a snowman! Use chopped raisins and pieces of carrot to decorate.



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: Read "Gabriel's Cello." Talk about what talents you have to make people smile. How can you help someone this Christmas?



IDEA 2: Start your Christmas countdown! How can you follow Jesus's teachings to help others? Read "The Christmas-List Surprise" to see what Samantha D. did.



IDEA 3: Read "The Christmas Eve Guest" together. How can you reach out to people around you? Elder Pieper has some ideas on the Friend to Friend story too.



Idea 1: 8; Idea 2: 24, 16; Idea 3: 36, 20

Gabriel's CELLO

Hi!
I'm Gabriel.

I have a
talent that can
help people!

*From an interview with
Carrie Salisbury*

1

I practice my cello every day with my dad or my mom. My little brother and sister play instruments too. Playing together is fun!

2

Whenever I see people who don't have homes, I want to help them. My mom and I decided we could use our talents to help.

3

I started learning songs on my cello. I learned 15 Christmas and Hanukkah songs. On Christmas Eve my mom and I went to a shopping area and played for the shoppers. We had a sign that said "Tips to Benefit the Food Pantry."

4

I felt a little bit nervous about playing in front of strangers, so I just focused on my songs. We played until my fingers were too cold to play any more. I was happy when our music made people smile. And lots of them gave us money.





5

We took all the money and gave it to the food pantry.



6

I'm glad I could help, and all I had to do was play songs! I want to do it again next year!

THANKS FOR YOUR HEARTS!

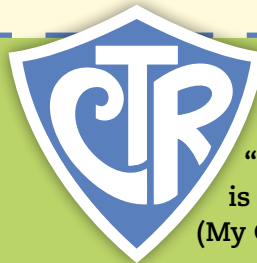
This year thousands of children sent us paper hearts telling us how they've filled the world with love. Next year we'll be collecting stars! Find out more in next month's *Friend*.

There are about 200 million stars in the Milky Way.



Think we can get that many? Get ready to send them in!

Print cards at CTR2017.lids.org.



CHALLENGE

"I will only listen to music that is pleasing to Heavenly Father" (My Gospel Standards).



This Sunday, read the words of a hymn during the sacrament.



Sing or listen to a good song with someone in your family.



Memorize the words to a Primary song.



I challenge myself to ...

Christmas Puzzles

Jumbled Jellybeans

Samantha gave her friend Kaisha a bag of jellybeans for Christmas full of Kaisha's favorite colors. The bag has five different colors of jellybeans, each with a different amount. Can you figure out how many of each color went into the bag? Answers on page 39.

CLUES:

1. There are twice as many purple as pink.
2. There are three more orange than pink.
3. There is one more blue than orange.

	1	2	3	4	5
BLUE					
YELLOW					
PURPLE					
ORANGE					
PINK					

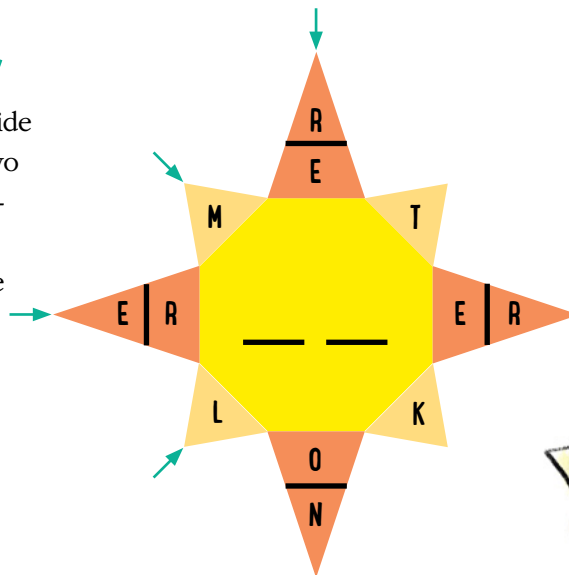
Rambling Riddles

Solve the riddles below! As you move down the puzzle, each new answer will use the letters of the previous word minus one. Sometimes you'll have to rearrange the letters. After the fourth word, the words grow again by *adding* one letter at a time. Answers on page 39.

1. You open these on Christmas morning. →
2. When you want to make "rock" in rock, paper, scissors. →
3. What you do when you're tired of standing. →
4. "Oh what fun it _ _ to ride in a one-horse open sleigh." →
5. How you get down a snowy mountain fast, standing up. →
6. Where to wash your hands before eating Christmas treats! →
7. What a pig does when he wants breakfast. →

Finish the Star

Can you place two letters inside the Christmas star to make two six-letter words and two four-letter words? Be sure to read the words in the direction the arrows are pointing. Answer on page 39.





“The spirit of Christmas makes us all more charitable, thoughtful, and kind.”

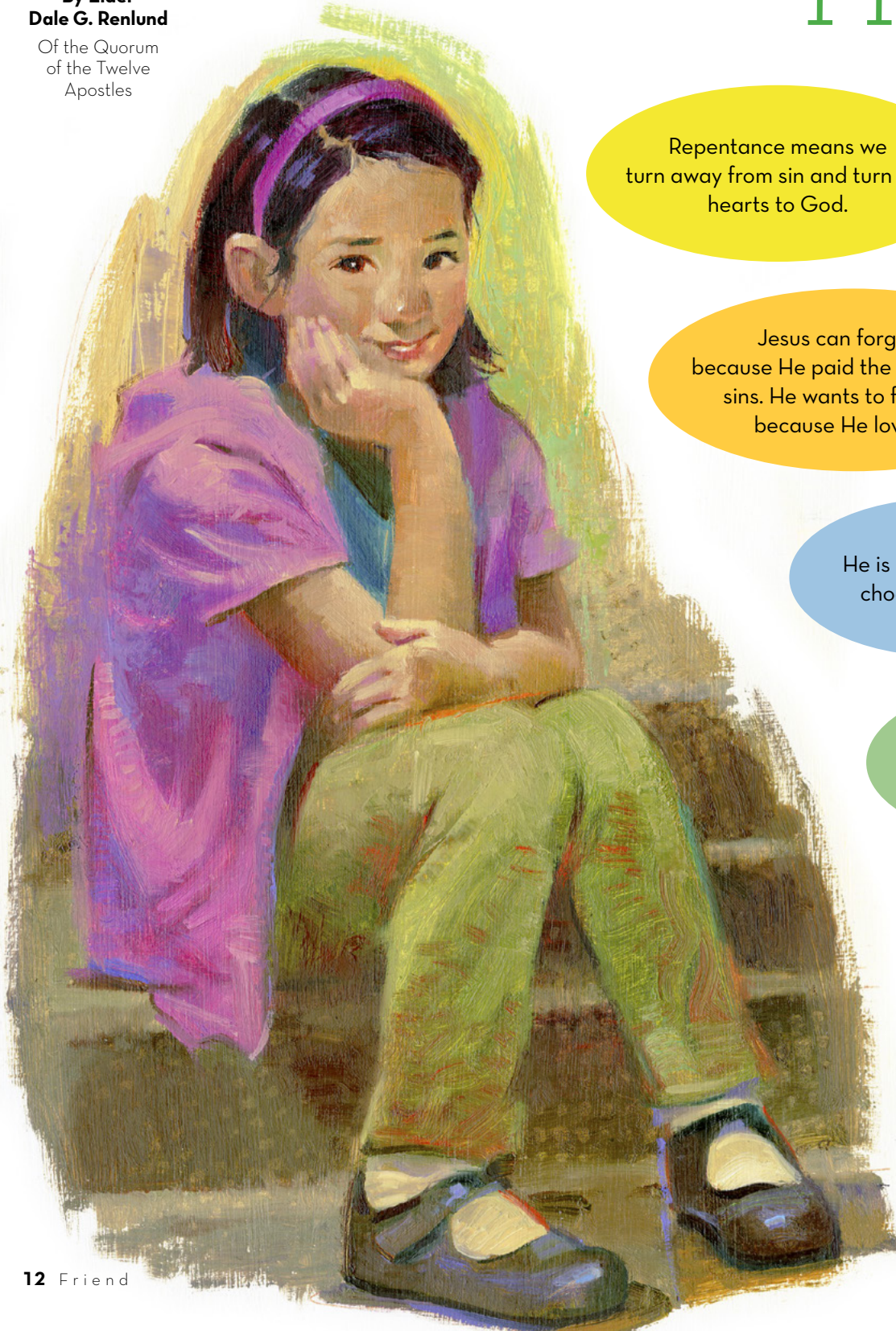
—Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson,
Young Women General President



**By Elder
Dale G. Renlund**

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

How can repenting help me feel happy?



Repentance means we
turn away from sin and turn our
hearts to God.

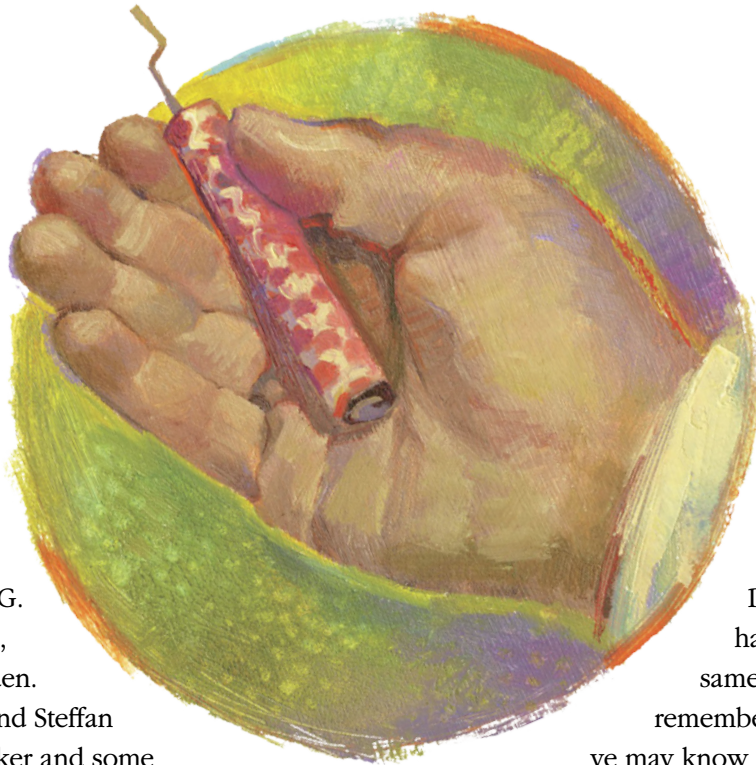
Jesus can forgive us
because He paid the price for our
sins. He wants to forgive us
because He loves us.

He is happy when we
choose to repent.

When He forgives us,
we can feel happy too.

*Adapted from
"Repentance: A
Joyful Choice,"
Ensign, Nov. 2016,
121–124.*

The Firecracker



When Elder Dale G. Renlund was 12, his family lived in Sweden. One Sunday, Dale's friend Steffan brought a large firecracker and some matches into the Church building. Dale was excited. Dale took the firecracker and lit the fuse. He was going to snuff out the fuse, but he burned his fingers and dropped the firecracker! Dale and Steffan watched in horror as the fuse kept burning.

The firecracker exploded! An awful smell filled the chapel. Dale and Steffan quickly picked up the pieces of firecracker and opened the windows to let the smell out. They hoped no one would notice.

As people came to sacrament meeting, they *did* notice. The smell was so strong that people couldn't focus on the meeting. Dale felt very embarrassed and ashamed. He knew that what he had done had disappointed Heavenly Father.

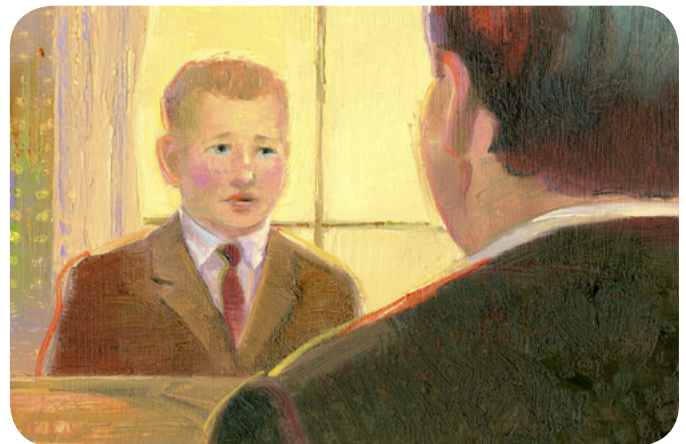
After church, President Lindberg, the branch president, asked Dale to come to his office because he could tell that something was wrong. Dale told President Lindberg how sorry he was about the firecracker.

President Lindberg was kind. He opened the scriptures and asked Dale to read some underlined verses.

Dale read, "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more. By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them" (D&C 58:42–43).

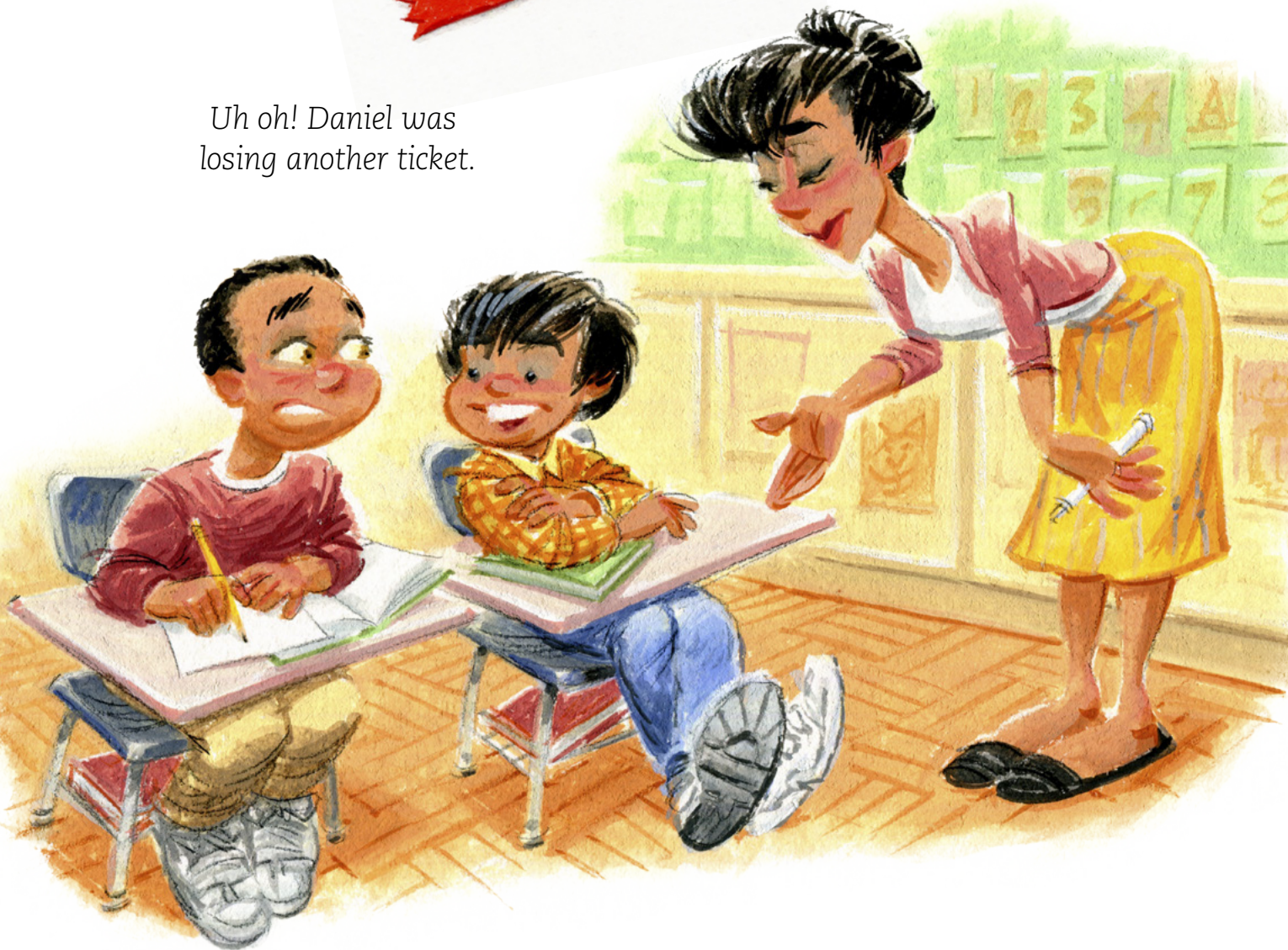
When Dale finished reading, he saw President Lindberg smile. As Dale left the office, he felt happy.

Elder Renlund learned that he could be forgiven when he did something wrong. He could feel happy when he repented and kept Heavenly Father's commandments. ♦



The **RED** Ticket

Uh oh! Daniel was losing another ticket.



By Darcie Jensen Morris

(Based on a true story)

"Whenever I am good and kind and help someone I see, I feel so very happy" (Children's Songbook, 197).

Mateo looked at the math problem on the board and quickly wrote it down in his notebook. Math was his favorite subject, so he really wanted to pay attention. But he could barely hear what Mrs. Santos was saying because his friend Daniel was talking.

"Shh! Daniel, I can't hear!" Mateo whispered. But Daniel kept talking. Finally Mrs. Santos heard him.

"Daniel, you're interrupting again," Mrs. Santos said. "You've already had a warning. Now you need to give me a ticket."

Daniel slowly reached into his desk and handed her a red ticket. His shoulders slumped, and he looked down at the floor. Mrs. Santos gave tickets to students who behaved well and followed directions. The students wrote their names on the tickets and put them in a jar each day. But you had to give a ticket back if you misbehaved. Every Friday, Mrs. Santos pulled a ticket out of the jar, and the winner got to choose a prize from the

class treasure chest. Daniel had to give a lot of tickets back for talking, so his name wasn't drawn very often. Mateo felt bad that Daniel was losing another ticket.

At recess Mateo ran out to the field to play soccer. He saw Daniel standing alone by the swings. He could tell Daniel was crying. Mateo wanted to help him feel better.

"Do you want to play soccer?" Mateo asked.

Daniel didn't say anything. Mateo tried to talk to him more, but Daniel just turned away.

"Well, I'll be on the playground if you change your mind."

Mateo went to play with his other friends, but he kept thinking about Daniel. Mateo was turning eight and was going to be baptized soon. He wanted to be like Jesus and be a good friend. Was there something he could do to help Daniel?

The next day, the class was reading a story in small groups. But instead of reading, Daniel was tossing his book high into the air.

Mateo tried to stop him. "Daniel, we need to read the book, not play with it."

Daniel tossed the book again. Mrs. Santos saw it almost hit the ceiling. She walked over to Daniel and held

out her hand for a ticket. Daniel reached into his desk. Panic crossed his face as he kept searching.

Oh no! He must be out of tickets! Mateo thought. No tickets meant Daniel would have to stay inside for recess. Mateo's mind started racing. What could he do? Then he had a good thought.

"Daniel," Mrs. Santos said, "if you don't have a ticket for me, then—"

Mateo took a deep breath. "May I pay for him, Mrs. Santos?" he asked.

The class went quiet. No one had ever asked her that before. Mateo wasn't sure what she would say.

Mrs. Santos looked surprised. Then she smiled. "You're a very good friend. Yes, you may pay Daniel's ticket for him." Mateo handed Mrs. Santos one of his tickets.

"Thanks, Mateo," said Daniel.

"Sure!" said Mateo. "Do you want to read together now?"

Daniel nodded and picked up his book.

As Daniel started reading, Mateo felt warm and happy inside. That good idea had come from the Holy Ghost! Mateo knew that Jesus had wanted him to help Daniel—because He loves Daniel. And Mateo felt Jesus's love too! ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.



JESUS PAID FOR US

Mateo paid Daniel's ticket because he cared about him. We can't pay for someone else's sins, but Jesus Christ can! Because He loves us, Jesus paid the price for all of our sins. When we do something wrong, we can repent and be forgiven. Jesus can help us do better!



By Samantha D., age 12,
Utah, USA

One day I decided to make a Christmas wish list because I was so excited about Christmas. I made a fancy title and used Santa Claus hats as bullet points.

My older brother came into the room to print off his list. I didn't really care about his list because mine was going to be so fantastic. Mine had color and Santa Claus hats, and his was only black and white.

I wanted a lot of stuff: a pogo stick, pens, a puppy, a cat, etc. When I was done, I put my list on the fridge. My brother's list was already hanging up. It said, "This year I

would like to use half my Christmas money to give to others."

I was amazed at what my brother was doing with his Christmas money. I couldn't believe it. My brother who gets in fights with me a lot was giving instead of getting.

My Christmas list now seemed small and almost useless. Maybe I could do the same thing. I would be helping others, and I would feel good about myself. There's a center near my home that helps children. I asked my mom if I could make some blankets for the kids there for Christmas. I hope I can give just like my brother.

I learned a lot more than I probably have ever learned about Christmas. Jesus Christ gave His life for us, so why should we not give to others in need? We don't need all our wants. This year I will think more about Christ and what He did for us than I ever have. And I will focus on giving instead of getting. ♦



The Christmas-List Surprise

Find It!

This group of friends heard about a nearby town that was having a hard time after a flood. They want to raise money to help kids from that town have a brighter Christmas. Can you find the hidden objects?



What happens after a temple is built?

The HOUSE

By Amie Jane Leavitt

1

Open House

During the open house, anyone is welcome to go inside the temple on a free tour. Visitors get to see all of the beautiful rooms in the temple and feel the special feeling inside the sacred building.



The St. George Utah Temple was the first to have an open house. It lasted just one day! Now open houses last several weeks.



2

Cultural Celebration

The evening before the dedication, the youth in the area share music, dance, and stories about their culture. Families, friends, and Church leaders come to the performance.



The first cultural celebration was held before the dedication of the Accra Ghana Temple in January 2004.



3

Cornerstone

On the day of the dedication, General Authorities put mortar around the temple cornerstone in a special ceremony. Then children and other adults are often invited to help.



of the LORD

When the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated, people crowded outside the building just to be nearby. Why were people so excited for this event? Maybe because it took 40 years to build this temple!



At the end of a dedication, everyone sings "The Spirit of God." This song was written for the Kirtland Temple dedication and has been sung at every temple dedication since.

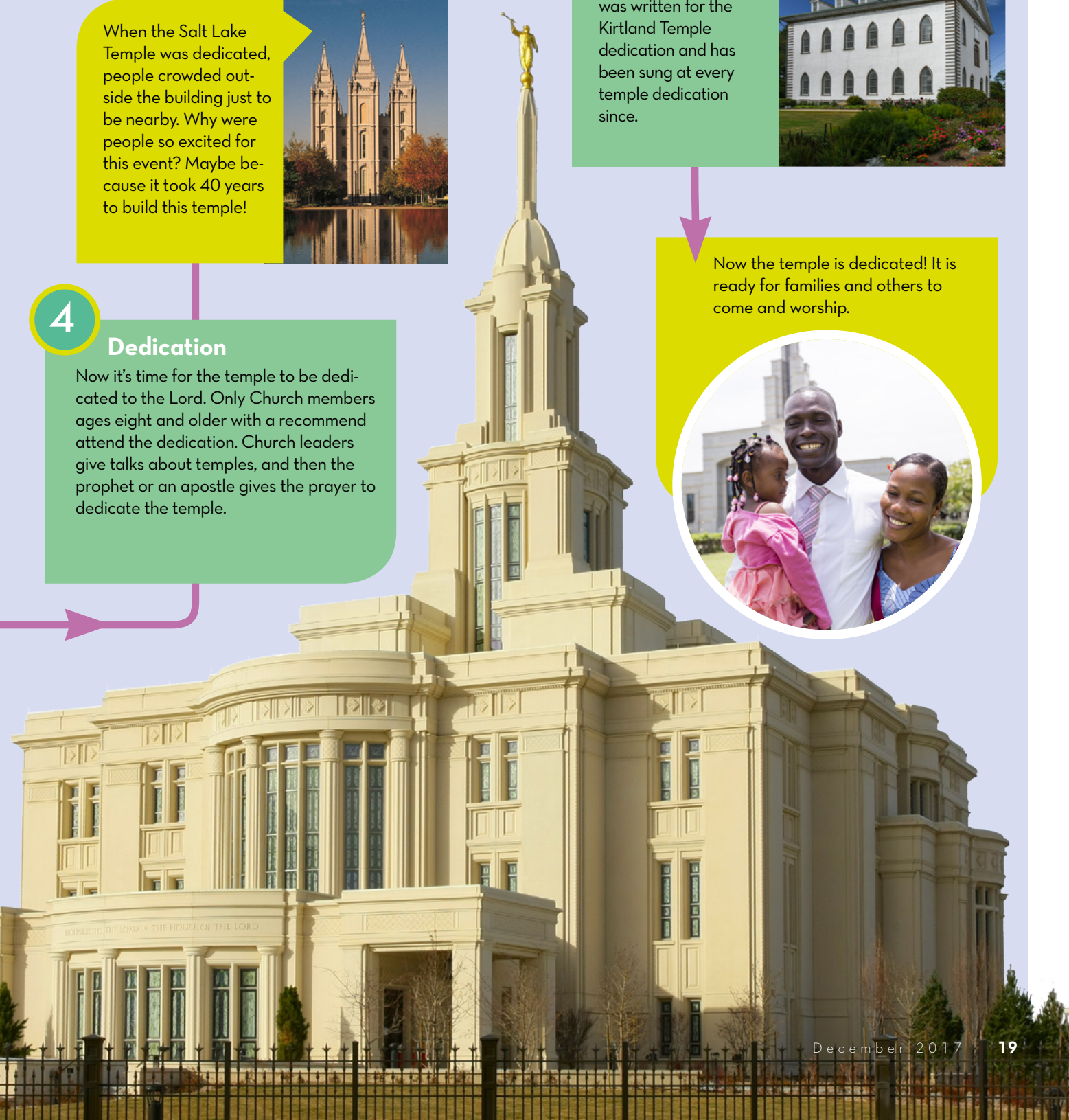


4

Dedication

Now it's time for the temple to be dedicated to the Lord. Only Church members ages eight and older with a recommend attend the dedication. Church leaders give talks about temples, and then the prophet or an apostle gives the prayer to dedicate the temple.

Now the temple is dedicated! It is ready for families and others to come and worship.





By Elder
Paul B. Pieper
Of the Seventy

Be Brave and SHARE!

From an interview with Jill Hacking



Our family has lived in many places all over the world. We have met lots of different people and had many chances to share the gospel. Our children have blessed others by sharing their testimonies.

When our children were young, we lived in the country of Kazakhstan. There were no missionaries there at that time. When friends or neighbors wanted to hear about the gospel, *we* got to be the missionaries!

Our daughter Marné shared the gospel with her friend Alyona. Alyona decided to be baptized with permission from her mother, who was later baptized with Alyona's younger sister. Recently Alyona married a righteous young man in the Manhattan New York Temple, and Marné got to be there! She was so happy that she had helped her friend learn about Jesus Christ.

When we lived in Virginia, USA, our son Chris was in Primary. One of Chris's friends and his family started meeting with the missionaries. Chris helped teach the family. He prepared before each lesson and helped answer their questions. The family decided to be baptized. After that, Chris never worried if he could serve a mission. He knew he could do it!

Another time a man came to work on our house. My wife thanked him when he was done. "We'd like to give you a gift," she said. She gave him a copy of the Book of Mormon.

The man became upset. He didn't understand what we believe. He thought we didn't believe in Jesus Christ.

Chris was brave and shared his testimony with the man. Chris said he was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He said he believed in Jesus.

Many of Heavenly Father's children don't know about the gospel. Others don't realize that we believe in Jesus. These people need someone who will be kind and talk to them. We can be brave and share our testimonies. We can help others learn about Jesus Christ! ♦

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Merry Christmas!



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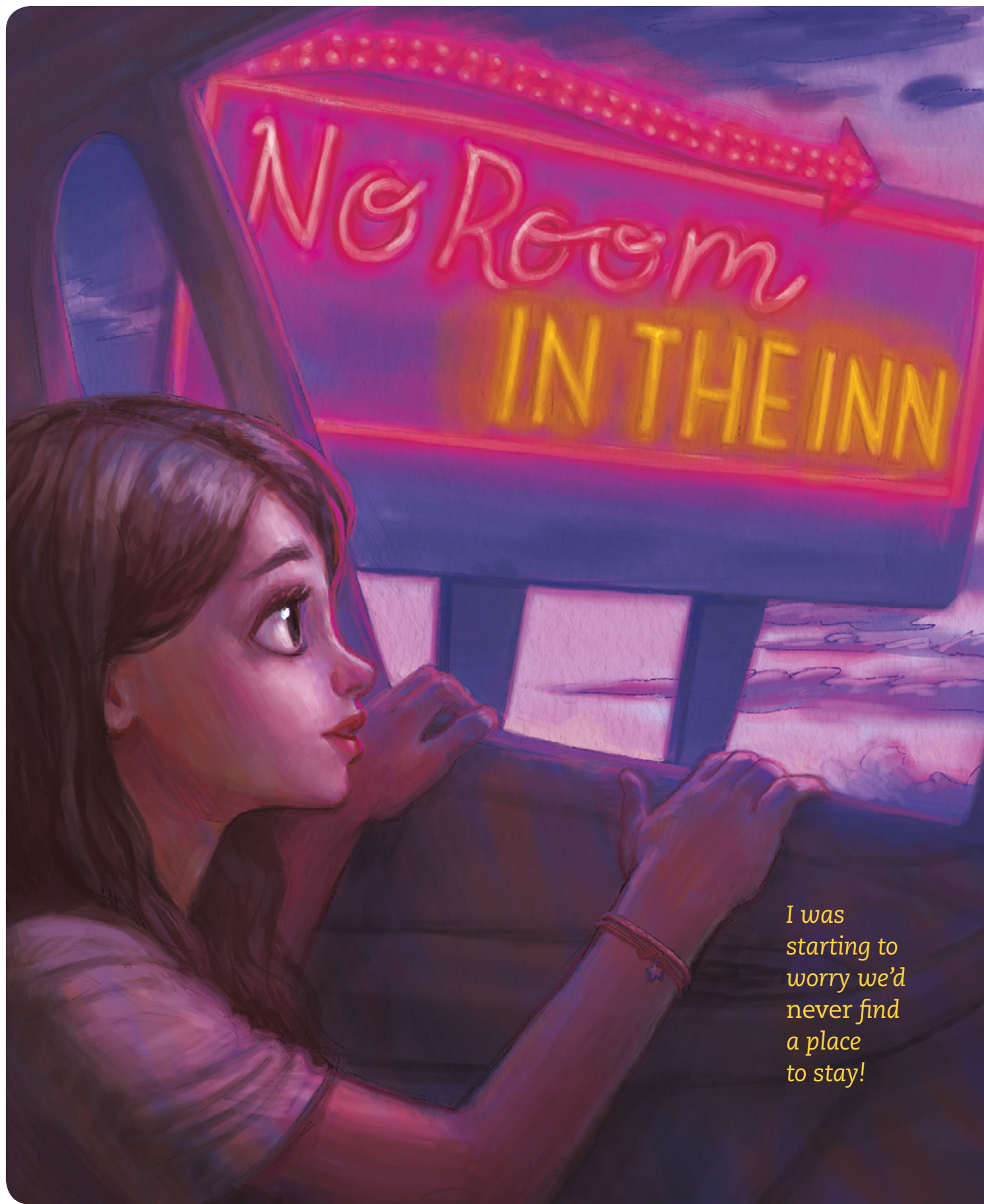
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I was starting to worry we'd never find a place to stay!

By Marné G. Reneer

(Based on a true story)

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7).

I stared out the car window, watching for a hotel. We had started looking for one when the sun was still up. Now it was getting dark, and we still hadn't found a place to stay. They were all full!

Just then my sister Katie poked me and pointed out the window. “Look, Eliza. I see one!”

I sat up straighter. My eyes fell on the big, bold letters lit up on the sign: NO VACANCY.

Dad frowned. “That one doesn't have any empty rooms. We'll have to try the next town.”

I was starting to worry that we'd *never* find a place to stay. So I said a quiet little prayer. When I was done, I didn't feel quite so worried. Somehow things would work out.

Soon Mom spotted another hotel. I looked around at the full parking lot. Would there be room for us here?

“I don't see a No Vacancy sign. Let's try it,” Dad said.

“Can I come in with you, Dad?” Katie asked.

Annie and Sarah peeked their heads over the back seat. “Us too?”

“Sure,” said Dad. “How about you, Eliza?” I nodded, and we all piled out and followed Dad across the dark parking lot.

“Aw, no pool,” Annie said, looking around.

When we got to the office, Sarah stretched her hand up to the counter and rang the bell. A lady came to the front desk. She was nice, but she told us that all the rooms were full.

I dragged my feet as we trooped back out to the car. When would Heavenly Father answer my prayer?

“No room again, huh?” Mom asked.

“Nope. But I got to ring the bell!” said Sarah.

“This is starting to feel like Mary and Joseph trying

to find somewhere to stay in Bethlehem,” said Mom. “There just isn't room for us!”

“Don't worry,” Dad said. “Something will work out. We should say a prayer.”

“I already did,” I said. “Heavenly Father helped Mary and Joseph. He can help us find a place to sleep too.”

“And maybe the next one will have a pool,” Annie added hopefully as Dad started the car.

Soon Dad found another hotel and pulled into the parking lot. My heart jumped. This one might be the answer to my prayer.

“It has a No Vacancy sign,” Dad said. “But I'll go ask just in case.”

Dad was gone for a long time. By the time he got back, I was nearly asleep. I thought I must be dreaming when I heard him say, “We'll stay here.”

“Really?” I asked. “What about the No Vacancy sign?”

“The manager said his family owns a nice little camper that's behind the hotel. He said we could sleep there.”

The camper was old but clean. There wasn't a lot of room, but everyone had a place to sleep. Mom and Dad shared the bed with Sarah. The table folded down to make another bed for Katie. Annie and I slept on the floor. It was just right. Like the stable was just right for Mary and Joseph and the manger was just right for the new baby Jesus.

Before I fell asleep, I said a little prayer. *Thank you, Heavenly Father. Thank you for helping us find a room. It's perfect.* ◆

The author lives in Utah, USA.



“Prayer is a gift from God. We need never feel lost or alone.”

Sister Carol F. McConkie,
First Counselor in the Young Women
General Presidency

“The Soul's Sincere Desire,” Ensign, Nov. 2016, 27.

Dec. 1

"Freely ye have received, freely give"
(Matthew 10:8).

Dec. 2

"I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink"
(Matthew 25:35).

Dec. 3

"Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days"
(Matthew 12:12).

Dec. 6

"Judge not, that ye be not judged"
(Matthew 7:1).

Dec. 8

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you"
(Matthew 5:44).

Dec. 10

"Search the scriptures"
(John 5:39).

Dec. 9

"I was sick, and ye visited me"
(Matthew 25:36).

Dec. 11

"If ye love me, keep my commandments"
(John 14:15).

Dec. 13

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"
(Matthew 7:12).

Dec. 14

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"
(Matthew 6:21).

Dec. 15

"Blessed are the merciful"
(Matthew 5:7).

Dec. 4

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"
(Matthew 22:39).

Dec. 5

"Honour thy father and mother"
(Matthew 15:4).

Dec. 7

"Suffer the little children to come unto me"
(Mark 10:14).

Dec. 12

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted"
(Matthew 5:4).

Dec. 16

"[I] was naked, and ye clothed me"
(Matthew 25:36).

Dec. 17

“Ye shall meet together oft”
(3 Nephi 18:22).

Dec. 25

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”
(Matthew 5:16).

Dec. 19

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad”
(Matthew 5:12).

Dec. 20

“A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth”
(Luke 12:15).

Dec. 23

“Blessed are all the peacemakers”
(3 Nephi 12:9).

Dec. 18

“Forgive men their trespasses”
(Matthew 6:14).

Dec. 21

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat”
(Matthew 25:35).

Dec. 22

“That which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do”
(3 Nephi 27:21).

Dec. 24

“Ye must watch and pray always”
(3 Nephi 18:15).

Find more about the teachings of Jesus Christ at Mormon.org during December!

Light the World

Each day, read something that Jesus taught, and then think about how you can follow His teaching. Then color in the star!

Show and tell



A jar of money was left on our doorstep with a red bow around it to help my family with our Christmas. It made me feel happy, so I thought how could I help someone else have a special Christmas. I decided to give my new pretty hair bows to a girl in my neighborhood.

Sawyer S., age 5, Colorado, USA



There was a new boy on our bus getting teased. I asked him to come sit by us, and soon we were laughing and having fun together. Later that day, I realized it was a day of service for #LightTheWorld.

Daxton J., age 9, Utah, USA



My school donated blankets to children during the holidays. We decided to make our blanket for a family home evening. It was fun!

Lincoln R., age 5, Iowa, USA

Watch a video about the hearts you sent in! Go to friend.lds.org during December.



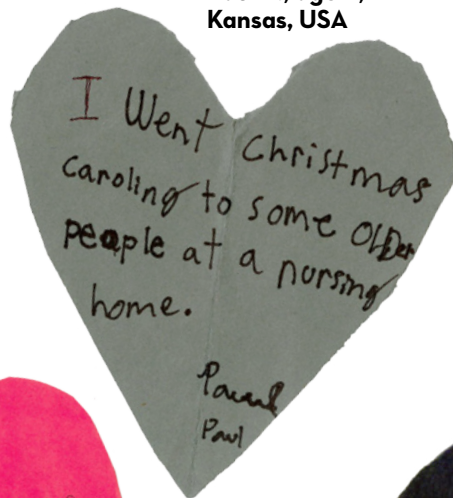
Tessa T., age 10, Aomori, Japan



For the #LightTheWorld project, each member of our family wrote down on a light bulb what we did each day. It helped us to think more about the true meaning of Christmas.

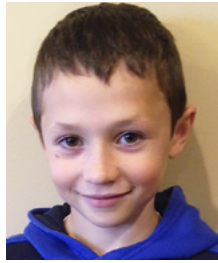
Stuart, Rebecca, and Thomas E., ages 3, 4, and 6, Oregon, USA

Paul L., age 9, Kansas, USA





Our family gets together to make a special gingerbread building for the Christmas season. It's fun, and we like to help by eating it!
Roderick and Daveney M., ages 4 and 5, Washington, USA



I built a Nativity out of blocks to be a part of our ward's display of over 500 Nativities! Members of the community came and celebrated the Christmas season at our church.
Joshua F., age 8, Missouri, USA



Ayvah M., age 9, Northland Region, New Zealand



Benjamin W., age 8, Texas, USA



Julia K., age 10, Idaho, USA



Elijah and Everett K., ages 9 and 6, Utah, USA

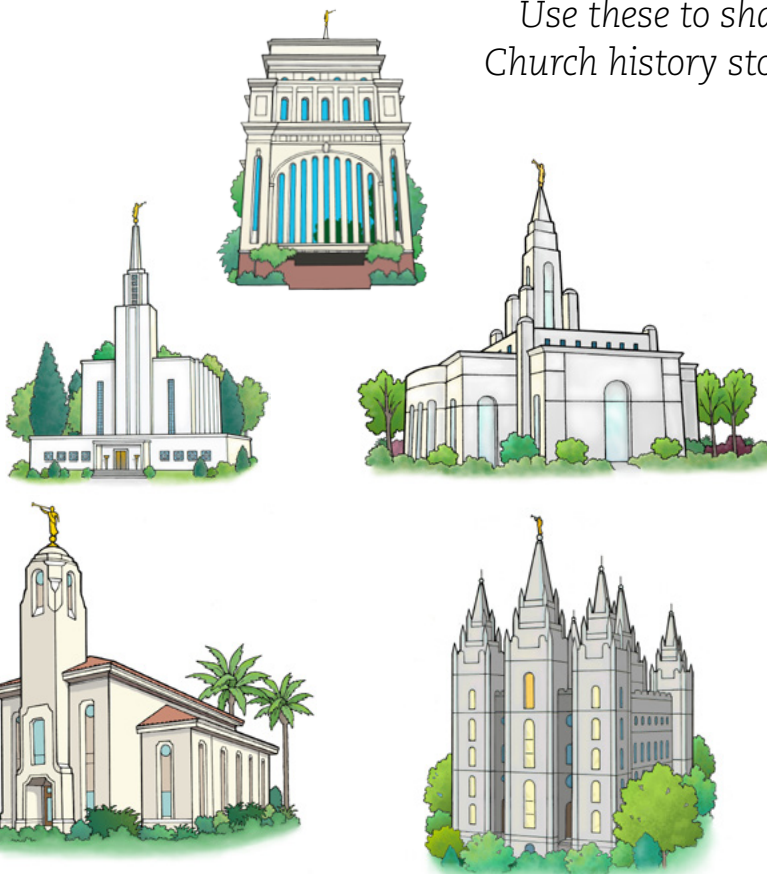
I gave christmas
bread to my
Primary teachers.
- Everett
age 6



My great-grandma didn't have a Christmas tree, so we brought her one. And I made the ornaments for it!
Annabelle F., age 4, Florida, USA

The Church Today

Use these to share
Church history stories!



President Thomas S. Monson



The Saints built a beautiful city in the Salt Lake Valley and spent 40 years building the Salt Lake Temple. The Church has grown a lot since those early days, and we still follow a living prophet today. Now there are 159 finished temples around the world! The Book of Mormon has been translated into 90 languages, and parts of it have been translated into 21 more languages.

We hope you enjoyed this year's series of Church history figures! Find more figures at [lessonhelps.lds.org](https://www.lessonhelps.lds.org) under the category "Scripture Figures."



MATT AND MANDY



Make Room for Him

Words by Larry Hiller
Music by Michael F. Moody

Litlingly ♩ = 76-84

1. When Ba - by Je - sus came to earth So man - y years a -
 (2. Just) like the inn of Beth - le - hem, Our lives can be so
 (3. We) can't go back to Beth - le - hem To let the Dear Child

mp

go, The inn was full, no room to spare. Poor
 full Of all the bus - y things we do That
 in. But we can o - pen our heart's door to

Ma - ry found no safe place there For our dear
 some - times, with - out mean - ing to, We don't leave
 young and old, to rich and poor, And share Christ's

Sa - vior's birth. _____ 2. Just
 room for Him. _____ 3. We
 love with them, _____

And share Christ's love with them. _____

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for older KIDS



THINK ABOUT IT

"Humility is essential to gain the blessings of the gospel."

-Elder Steven E. Snow of the Seventy

BRAIN TEASER

What word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

See page 39.



DEAR JOURNAL

What Christmas traditions does your family have? Draw a picture of your favorite one!



MY HAIKU

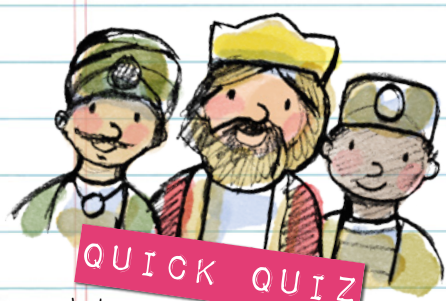
The first principle
Of the gospel: simple faith
In our Savior, Christ

Ayden C., age 8, Washington, USA



SECRET SERVICE

Bring a holiday treat to a friend or neighbor!



QUICK QUIZ

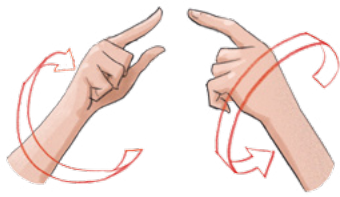
What direction did the Wise Men come from?
(Hint: See [Matthew 2:1](#)) Answer on page 39.

- north
- east
- south
- west



My family reads the Book of Mormon and prays every day before school and work. During the day I always think of the scriptures that we read. It also seems like I have more time to get ready for school and the day.

Ella M., age 10, Idaho, USA



Signs of Friendship



By Amy Christenson
and Ashley Barnett

"I have called you friends"
(John 15:15).

"Mom, how can I find a friend?" Connor asked. He watched Mom put down her book.

"There are lots of ways," she said. "Did you try what we talked about? Smiling at people and talking about your hobbies?"

"Nothing works." Connor sat on the couch by Mom and twisted his hands together. "I just want a friend. Someone who understands me and will be kind to me." Connor was feeling sad and lonely, more every day. He had autism, and it was hard finding a friend who was nice to him.

"I'm so sorry," Mom said. "I know it's been hard without friends for so long, especially with the bullies at school. Did you try praying about it?"

"No." Connor sighed.

Mom smiled. "Sometimes friends find us. And sometimes we have to find them." She put her arm around Connor. "When I was younger, I was really lonely too. I prayed for two years, and then I found a very special friend."

Connor's back straightened. "Who did you find? Was it Jamie?"

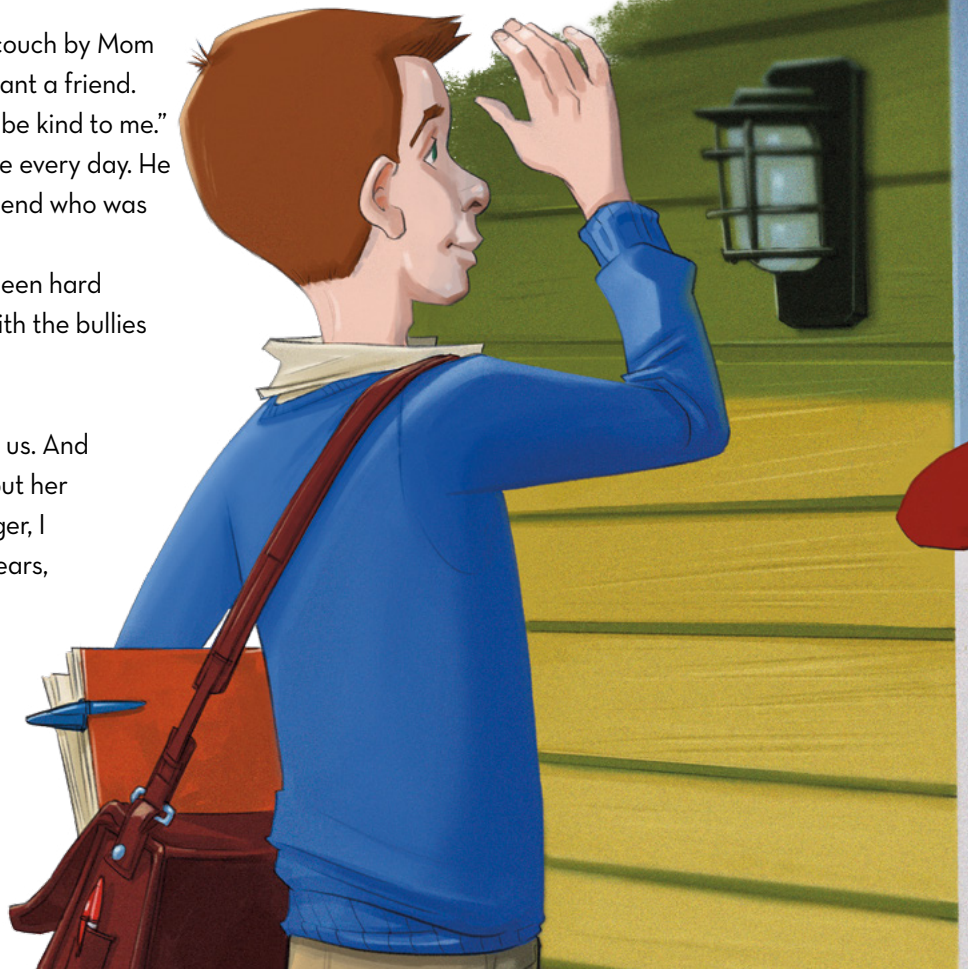
Mom nodded. "I prayed and looked for someone and found Jamie."



"She's your best friend!" Connor felt happier inside. If Mom found a friend by praying, maybe he could too! When he said his prayers that night, he prayed to find someone who also needed a friend.

Connor looked for a friend at school. He looked at the grocery store. He looked at church. And he kept praying.

Connor was walking home one day and saw kids playing outside. They were his new neighbors, the ones who just moved in with their dad and stepmom. Connor didn't know them very well. One of the boys, Seth, was deaf. He went to a sign language ward for church.



No one else in the neighborhood knew sign language. *It must be hard for Seth to feel like he doesn't have friends to talk to*, Connor thought.

Wait! he thought. *Seth needs a friend. Just like I do!*

Connor found some books at the library about sign language. He practiced everywhere he could. He practiced in the bathroom mirror. He practiced in the car. Soon Connor could sign lots of words.

Then one day Connor knocked on Seth's big front door. He held a notebook and a sign language book under his arm.

When Seth came to the door, Connor put his hand to his forehead. He kept his fingers close and then moved his hand out, like a salute. Connor had learned that was how to sign *hello*.

Seth made the sign too. He smiled a little bit. He pointed at the sign language book and raised his eyebrows.

Connor signed, *I'm learning sign language*. Then he opened the notebook and wrote, "Can you teach me more?"

Seth's smile got bigger. He waved Connor inside, and they sat in the family room together. They signed back and forth for a few minutes. Connor wrote down questions on the notebook, and Seth wrote his answers below. Seth taught Connor a bunch of new signs. Pretty soon the notebook page was filled.

Connor couldn't believe it. He was learning sign language with his new friend!

After a few weeks, Connor and Seth didn't need books or papers anymore. They learned how to understand each other, and they both liked having a kind friend.

"Mom, I did what you told me to do," Connor said one night after getting back from Seth's house. "I prayed to find someone who needed a friend and would be mine too. Seth was the one I found!" ♦

The authors live in Utah, USA.



In sign language, you use your hands and expressions to communicate.

Sorry, Stretch! I guess you weren't meant to sign.

CHRISTMAS Workshop

Be sure to get an adult's help.

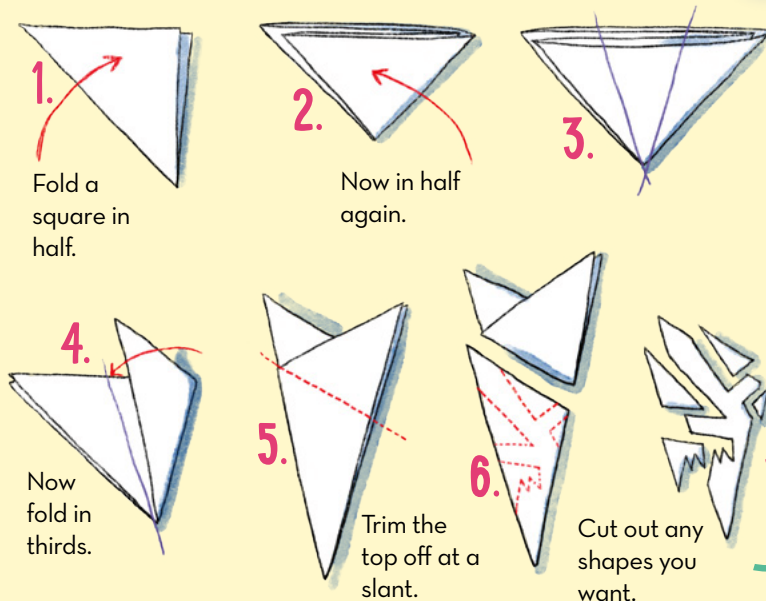


Snow Painting

Make colorful artwork in the snow! Here's how: Fill a few plastic bottles with water. Squeeze 8–10 drops of food coloring into the water (use a different color for each bottle). Take the bottles outside and pour the colored water into the snow. Try "painting" clothes onto a snowman! Or use chalk to draw colorful snowmen on the sidewalk!



Perfect PAPER Snowflake



If it didn't turn out how you wanted, just get another paper and try again!

Sticky Shepherd

By Val Chadwick Bagley

1. Glue a cotton ball to the top of a large craft stick.
2. Cover the cotton ball with a small piece of fabric and tie a string around it to make the shepherd's hat.
3. Wrap another piece of fabric around the craft stick and tie a string around the middle to make the shepherd's clothes.
4. Draw two eyes and glue on a cotton-ball beard.
5. Bend a pipe cleaner into a crook and slide it into the shepherd's belt.



Try making some cotton-ball sheep to go with it!

Don't cut all the way across.



CUCUMBER WREATHS

With an adult's help, slice a cucumber into 1-inch (2-cm) pieces. Scoop out some of the inside with a spoon to make a bowl, and fill it with cream cheese, sour cream, or ranch dressing. Sprinkle finely chopped green veggies around the rim. Finish with a bow made from red bell pepper.

Warm Vanilla Steamer

Tired of hot chocolate? Try this yummy vanilla drink! Heat 4 cups milk and 1/4 cup sugar in small saucepan over medium heat until steaming. Stir in 1 tablespoon vanilla extract and whisk until frothy.



Guacamole Christmas Trees

Guacamole

Red Peppers

Pita Bread

Pretzel Stick



The Christmas Eve Guest

It was always the best night of the year. Now it would be ruined!



By Holly K. Worthington

(Based on a true story)

“Sing the carols of the Christ child: Let your neighbors know you care” (Children’s Songbook, 51).

Shannon loved her family’s Christmas Eve traditions. First they ate fried rice and dumplings at their favorite Chinese restaurant. Then they drove around the city to look at the Christmas lights. When they got home, they read the Christmas story from the Bible together. And before bed, they got to open one present each. It was Shannon’s favorite night of the year. She could hardly wait!

Until Mom made an announcement.

“We’re having a special Christmas Eve guest this year. Remember Ms. Reed?”

Shannon groaned. “The neighbor Dad invited to church last week?”

“That’s right. Dad’s picking her up now.”

Shannon plopped into a chair. How could she relax and have fun with a stranger around? Christmas Eve was ruined! Well, Ms. Reed hadn’t come to church when Dad invited her. Maybe she wouldn’t come this time either.

But when Dad came through the door, the “special guest” was with him. Ms. Reed looked tired and kind of sad. Shannon said hello. But she didn’t want to say anything else. At dinner she just focused on her food while Mom and Dad chatted with Ms. Reed.

“Have you ever taken dance lessons?” asked a soft voice. Shannon saw that Ms. Reed was waiting for her to answer. She nodded and looked back down at her plate.



“Me too,” said Ms. Reed, her voice still quiet. “What’s your favorite dance style?”

Shannon shrugged, poking at a dumpling with her chopsticks.

“I love jazz,” Ms. Reed said. “I was on a dance team in college. One year we traveled all over Europe. It was amazing.”

Shannon looked up. That *did* sound amazing.

“What else do you like?” asked Shannon.

Ms. Reed gave a small smile. “Playing the piano. And math.”

Shannon’s eyes got big. “Really? Math is my favorite subject!”

Shannon talked to Ms. Reed for the rest of dinner. She

found out that Ms. Reed had a college degree in math and was studying to become a math professor when she met her husband. He had made some bad choices and was now in prison.

After dinner Shannon sat by Ms. Reed while they drove around to look at the Christmas lights. And when they read the Christmas story, she shared her scriptures with Ms. Reed so she could follow along.

Soon it was time to open presents. Shannon got some cozy purple pajamas. She couldn’t wait to put them on! But she felt a little bad that Ms. Reed didn’t have a present.

Just then Mom handed a gift to Ms. Reed. Ms. Reed smiled shyly and unwrapped a pair of dark blue socks. She looked up at Mom with watery eyes. “Thank you. You really didn’t need to get me anything.”

Shannon went to her bedroom and put on her new pajamas. She couldn’t stop thinking about Ms. Reed. She seemed so grateful to get socks for Christmas!

As Shannon slipped her own fuzzy socks on, she heard beautiful music begin to play. She ran downstairs to find Mom and Dad singing carols while Ms. Reed played the piano. Shannon joined in. As she sang, a warm feeling grew in her heart. *I guess it’s not so bad to have a guest on Christmas Eve*, she thought.

On Sunday, Ms. Reed came to church and sat with Shannon’s family during sacrament meeting. She looked really happy. Shannon smiled as she shared her hymn-book with Ms. Reed. Maybe it was time to add a new Christmas Eve tradition. ◆

The author lives in Idaho, USA.



I show love to my neighbor who lives alone by visiting her and drawing her pictures!

Jill K., age 10, California, USA



Prayer at the Start Gate



**By Noah G., age 10,
Utah, USA**

It was a cold day, and I was scared. I shook hard in my speed suit. It was my first ski race since I had been injured. The course was a long blur of blue and red gates. My coach skied by me.

“Noah, are you OK?” she asked.

“Yes,” I said, but I was actually scared out of my skin!

It was time for me to be at the start gate. *Oh no!* I thought as I skied down to the start gate. But then I remembered something I had learned in Primary: I can pray anytime, anywhere.

So I prayed, *Heavenly Father, please help me to be safe and do well.* Right then, I pushed out of the start.

What came next was natural instinct. Left, then right, gate after gate, for what felt like days until I finally crossed the finish line. *Boy, I was slow!* I thought. But I looked at the timer. I was 12th in my category!

“That was so good!” Mom said.

During the excitement, I silently thanked my Heavenly Father for answering my prayer. ◆

Building a Temple

Here's the finished Payson Utah Temple.

Thanks for joining us this year to see how it was built! Go to page 18 to see what happens *after* a temple is finished.



FUNSTUFF ANSWERS

Page 3: child, glory, speak, borne, alive

Page 10: 5 blue, 3 yellow, 2 purple, 4 orange, 1 pink; 1) gifts, 2) fist, 3) sit, 4) is, 5) ski, 6) sink, 7) oinks; AS

Page 31: the word *short*; east



HIDDEN CTR RINGS

Did you find the rings?
Look on pages FJ9, 5, and 38.

How to Write to the *Friend*

To send us a letter, drawing, poem, or story...

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.

The Last Laugh



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Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024
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with a survey?

Yes No

The following information and permission must be included:

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Signature of parent or legal guardian

Email of parent or legal guardian

THE *Friend* JUNIOR



4 0213415000000
13415 Dec 17

For Parents of Little Ones

Your little ones will feel something special this season when you give them the most meaningful gift of all—your testimony of the Savior.



Here are some ideas:

- To make a child-friendly Nativity set, glue drawings or illustrations from Church magazines to cardboard or blocks. Let your child play with the set while you read about the Nativity from the scriptures (see [Luke 2:1-20](#)).
- Make a paper-chain countdown. On the links write the titles of songs that tell the story of Jesus's birth. Listen to or sing one song each night.
- Light candles at dinner or sit around the Christmas tree before bedtime. Point out that we feel warm, peaceful, and happy when we think about Jesus.
- Remind your little ones about whose birthday we celebrate on Christmas and what we often do for birthdays—we give! Help your family simplify their wish lists by reading the story of the Wise Men. How many gifts did Jesus receive? The Wise Men brought a few thoughtful gifts filled with love.

▶▶ You can read past letters at FriendFPLO.Ids.org. ◀◀

ACTION RHYME

Away in a Manger



Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,



The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;



The stars in the heavens looked down where He lay,



The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

(Children's Songbook, 42-43)

Skyler's Nativity

By Jennifer Maddy



It's almost time for the Nativity play!



Skyler polishes a Wise Man's crown.



He helps put hay in the manger.



He helps the sheep.



He puts on his costume.



Skyler loves celebrating Jesus's birth!

Counting Stars

When Jesus was born, a bright star appeared in the sky.
How many stars can you count in this night sky?



STORIES OF JESUS

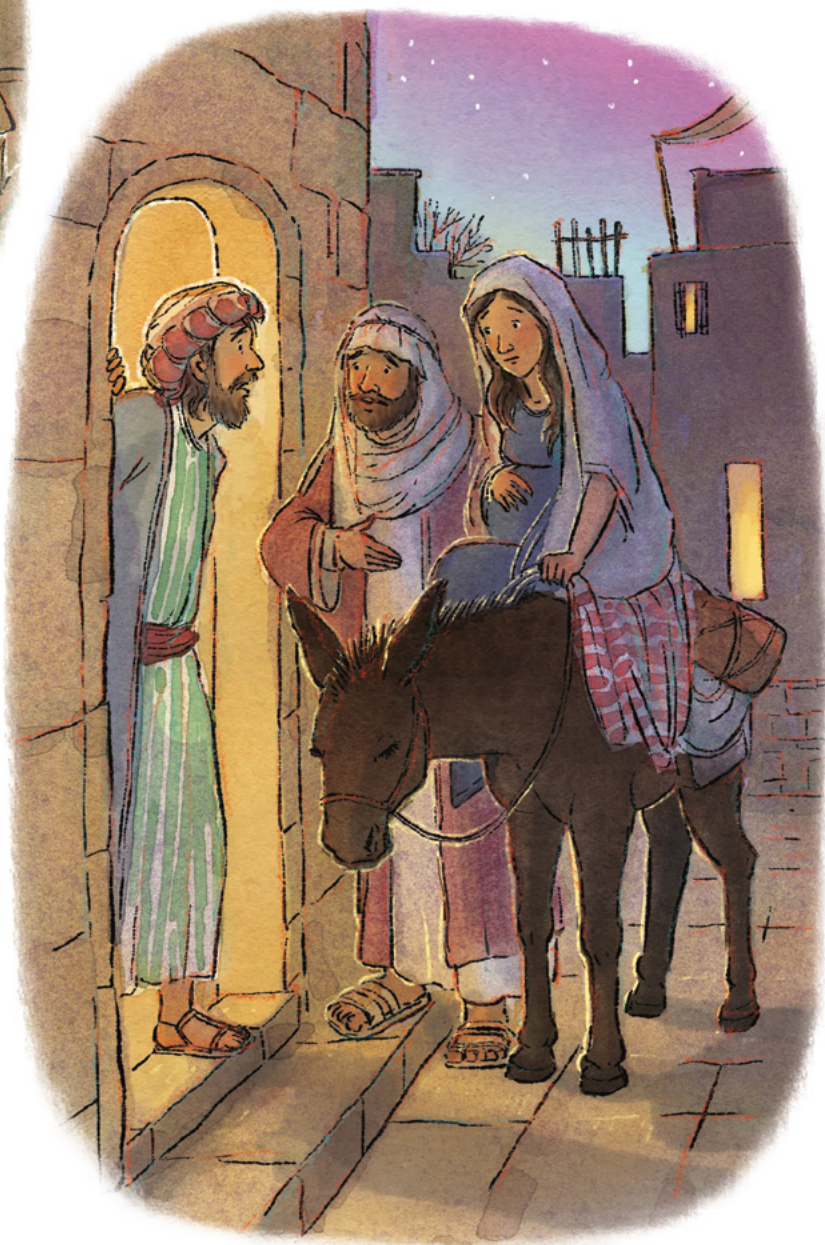
Jesus Was Born in Bethlehem

By Kim Webb Reid



An angel came to Mary and told her that God was happy with her. She was going to be Jesus's mother!

Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. It was almost time for Jesus to be born. So many people were visiting Bethlehem that Mary and Joseph couldn't find a room to stay in. An innkeeper let them stay in a stable.





Soon Jesus was born. A bright new star appeared to tell everyone that the Light of the World had come to earth.



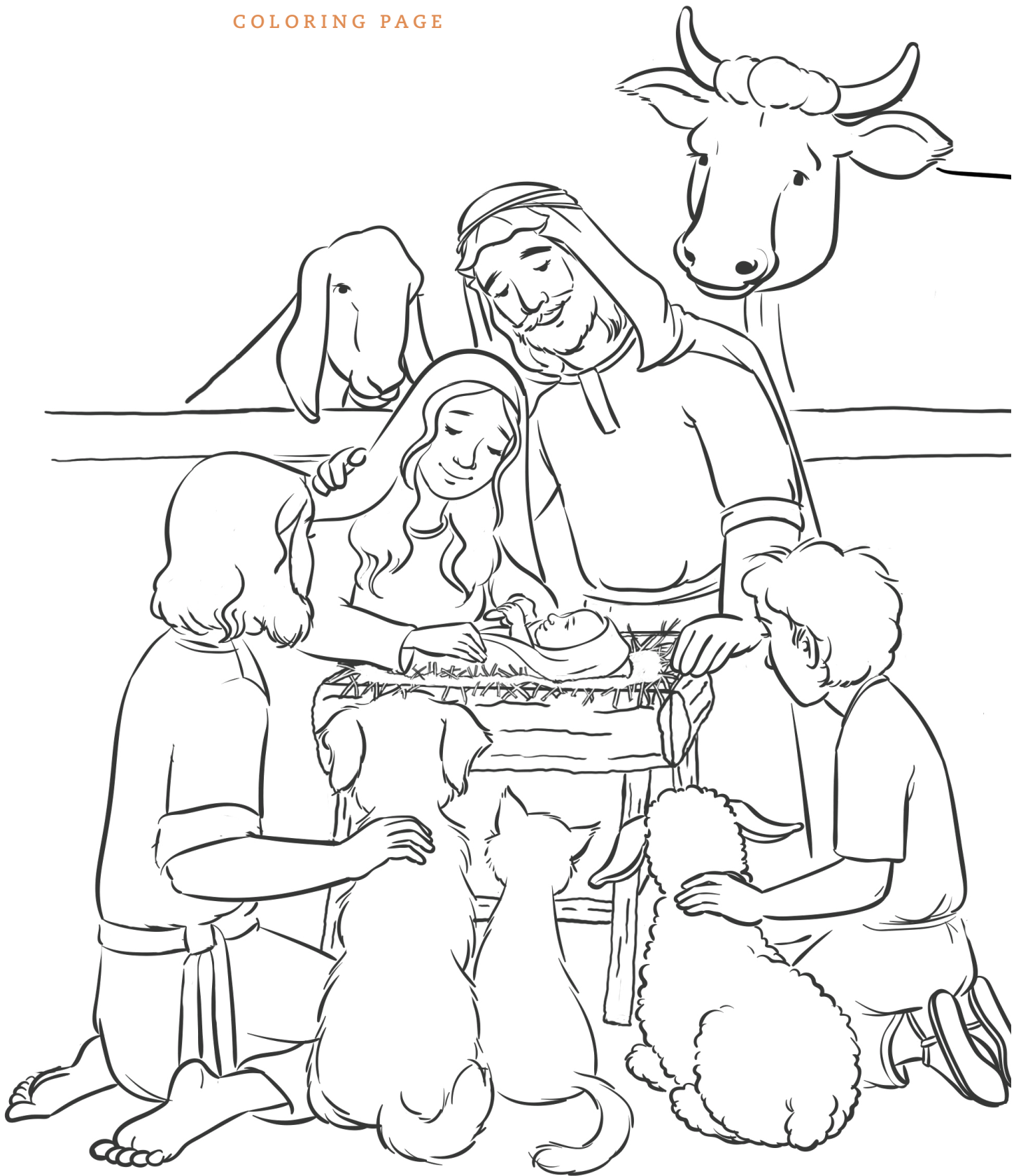
An angel told some shepherds that Jesus was born. They hurried to see the baby Jesus lying in a manger.



Jesus came to earth because He loves me. I will follow
His light this Christmas and all year! ◆

From Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20.

COLORING PAGE



“And [the shepherds] came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger” ([Luke 2:16](#)).



By Wendy Ellison

(Based on a true story)

Rrriinnnggg! Rriinnnggg! The recess bell rang. Monroe and her friends put on their coats. They hurried outside to play.

It was winter. It was cold. Monroe put on her fuzzy pink gloves. She was glad she had gloves to keep her hands warm.

Monroe and her friends had fun

on the swings and the slippery slide. But Monroe saw that some of her friends weren't wearing gloves. Their hands were red and cold. She wished she had gloves for their hands too.

After school Monroe had an idea. She asked Mom, "Can I take extra gloves to school tomorrow?"



Warm Heart

“Why?” Mom asked.

“Some of my friends didn’t have gloves today,” Monroe said. “They can borrow mine to keep their hands warm.”

“That’s a nice thing to do,” Mom said. They found all the gloves they could. They put them in Monroe’s backpack.

The next day at recess, Monroe shared the gloves with her friends. It was still cold outside, but the gloves kept their hands warm. Monroe was happy to share her gloves. As she played, her hands felt warm. And now, her heart did too. ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.