

NOVEMBER 29-DECEMBER 5

FOR PARENTS

Jesus died on the cross (crucifixion) and was raised from the dead (resurrection). We gather for worship on the first day of the week because it is the day when God raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. When we gather weekly on that day, the Spirit makes our hearts glad with the memory of our Lord's resurrection. The Spirit gathers us to worship God, builds us up in faith, hope, and love, and sends us into the world to proclaim the gospel and work for justice and peace.

After Jesus was raised from the dead, he appeared to his disciples, both women and men. He revealed himself to them as our living Lord and Savior. Through the Bible, Jesus continues to reveal himself to us today.

When his work on earth was done, Jesus returned to heaven to prepare a place for us and to rule with God in love. Jesus remains with us now through the gift of the Holy Spirit, given to the first Christians on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit moves us to understand and believe the gospel, gives us strength and wisdom to live

by it, and unites us into a new community called the church.

Jesus will come again in glory and is himself God's promise that suffering will come to an end, that death will be no more, and that all things will be made new. Evil is a terrible mystery; still, we know that God's triumph over evil is certain!

KID CONNECTION

Resurrection is the foundation of our faith. While there are evil forces at work in the world we remember that God is a God of love. It's okay for us to acknowledge powers that work against God; sometimes we call that evil Satan. The most important thing to remember is God's love is so powerful it overcame evil on the cross. **In his life of compassion, his death on the cross, and his resurrection from the dead, we see how vast is God's love for the world: a love that is ready to suffer for our sakes, yet so strong that nothing will prevail against it.**

REMEMBER 1 THING

**The Holy Spirit brings God's power into our lives. God's power is stronger than anything.
Amen!**

READING PLAN

Day	Chapter Titles	Scripture
	<p>From <i>Read and Learn Bible</i></p> <p><i>* find these stories on website</i></p>	
11/29	A Joyful Sunday (repeat); Jesus Is Alive!	Matthew 27:57-65; 28:1-10; Luke 24
11/30	Jesus Is Taken to Heaven	Luke 24:50-53
12/1	The Holy Spirit	Acts 2:1-42
12/2	A Miracle at the Beautiful Gate; Philip Baptizes a Traveler*	Acts 4:1-22; 8:26-40
12/3	Living Together*; Left Out *	Acts 2:42-47; 6:1-7
12/4	A New Apostle	Acts 9:1-31
Sunday	Damascus Road	Acts 9

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Instructions and discussion tips are available on the church website.

Choose one or more activities that will interest your family as you make this week's stories your own.

Second Sunday of Advent Activity

Continue lighting the Advent wreath as you count down the time until Jesus' entrance into the world.

Transformation Light: Science Activity

Supplies needed: pan, hand mirror.

Explore how light shines and can be bent using mirrors. Talk about how Jesus' love shone through Paul and shines through us.

Transformation Treats

Supplies needed: refrigerated pie dough, fruit filling, cinnamon, sugar, baking sheet.

Make fruit tarts and talk about all the ways that Saul changed.

Amazing Grace

Learn the story behind this familiar hymn. Check out Chris Tomlin's version of "Amazing Grace." Talk about the similarities between Paul's experience on the Damascus road and Newton's experience at sea.

November 29-December 5

Second Sunday of Advent

This week light two candles on your Advent Wreath or two white candles. Invite a family member to read the following (adapted from *The Family prepares for the Messiah*, Patricia Griggs.)

We belong to many families. We belong to the family gathered around this Advent Wreath/these candles. We belong to a larger family of relatives who are not here with us. We belong to our church family. We belong to the large Christian family which extends around the world and back in history to the time of Jesus. We belong to the Hebrew family from which Jesus came. Stories about our Christian and Hebrew ancestors are found in the Bible stories which we have been reading this fall.

Prayer: O Ancient One, we are overwhelmed with the thought that we are a part of such a large and significant family. We feel so insignificant when we stand alongside such greats as Abraham, Moses, Deborah, David, and Daniel. Yet we know that your Son Jesus has reminded us that each of us is important and you care even for me. Each of us sitting here comes to you with humble thanks for including us in your family and giving us the opportunity to glorify you with our lives. Be with us, we pray. Amen.

Transformation light (science activity)

Supplies needed: roaster pan, water, hand mirror to fit in pan.

The story of Jesus' encounter with Saul is a significant story for the life of the church because Paul didn't hide what happened to him. He did what Jesus asked and taught others all that he had seen and heard.

Place a pan of water on the floor. Give your child a flashlight and invite them to shine their light into the pan of water. Turn off the other lights in the room.

Say, "Jesus shined the light of his love on Paul. Jesus shines the light of his love on each of us as well. I wonder where our light shines."

Now hold up a mirror and invite each family member to look in it and tell what they see. Then put the mirror in the pan of water. Invite your child to shine the flashlight into the pan of water again (the light will now reflect off the mirrors and shine on the ceiling).

Talk with your family about how Paul's message about Jesus spread everywhere even until your family heard it. Wonder together about ways each family member reflects Jesus' love in the world and where your light shines.

- I wonder how you share Jesus' love in the world?
- I wonder in what new ways we can reflect Jesus' love to others?
- I wonder how our community (or family or church) would be different if everyone reflected Jesus' love as Paul?

Say a prayer together. "Loving God, thank you for shining Jesus' love into our lives. Help us be mirrors of your love with everyone we meet this week. Amen."

Transformation treats.

Supplies needed: refrigerated pie dough, can of fruit pie filling (lemon, cherry, apple- your choice) sugar, cinnamon (Optional), melted butter (optional), cookie sheet, baking utensils, waxed paper,

Roll out the dough that is at room temperature. Cut each circle into four pie-shaped pieces.

Give each family member a piece of waxed paper and one of the pie shaped pieces. Put one to two spoonfuls of fruit filling in the middle of the pie-shaped piece of dough. Pick up one side of the dough and fold it over to close the turnover. The turnover should look like a stuffed piece of pie. Dip your fingers into a little water and with wet fingers, press the edges of the turnover closed. Some filling may ooze out. This is okay. Sprinkle sugar on top of the turnover.

Optionally you may sprinkle melted butter and cinnamon on top as well.

Spray a cookie sheet with non-stick spray. Place turnovers on the cookie sheet. Bake them in a preheated 425 degree oven for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Remove the turnovers from the oven and immediately transfer them to a serving tray. Let them cool for 5-10 minutes before eating. While you eat, talk about the ways that Saul was transformed by his encounter with Jesus on the road.

Amazing Grace

Invite family members to listen to a traditional recording of the hymn [Amazing Grace](#). Share the story of the author of these words. Here is a short version of the life of John Newton

John Newton's father was the captain of a sailing ship in England. John's mother was a woman of faith. Following her death, John's upbringing in the Christian faith ended. Very early in his life, John signed on to the crew of a ship that carried slaves from the coast of Africa to other lands. Eventually he became the master of his own slave ship. One day in March in the year of his 23rd birthday, John's ship was caught at sea in a terrible storm. John stayed at the helm for 11 hours, praying to God for safe passage. He nearly lost his life. This close call made John rethink his life. He began to listen to the English preachers like John Wesley and George Whitfield and once again practiced the faith of his mother. Soon after, he gave up the slave trade and became a minister. He wrote the hymn *Amazing Grace* while serving a church in Olney, England.

Your family members might then enjoy listening to Chris Tomlin's version of *Amazing Grace, My chains are gone*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-4NFvI5U9w>

Talk about similarities between Paul's experience on the road to Damascus and Newton's experience at sea.

Wonder together how God may be speaking to you and inviting you to be transformed.