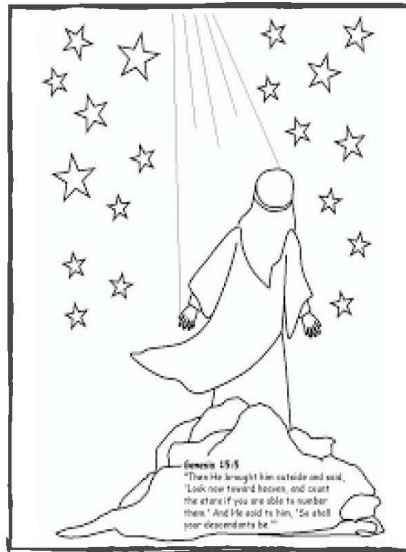


# FAMILY CONNECTIONS

OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 27



ZACCHAEUS

ALL SAINTS

ABRAHAM

# **Family Connections** - Unit 2: Oct. 23 – Nov. 20

## **Preschool through Grade 1**

October 23: Finishing our unit on Noah October 30:

### For All the Saints!

- Saints are people who have led holy lives by loving God and helping others.
- All baptized people are saints when God’s light shines in the world through them.
- The children made “Saint” crowns to remind them of how they are connected to one another as brothers and sisters in God’s family.
- **Help your child see how they are sharing God’s love with others whenever they do something kind or caring this week.**

### November 6: Prayer is talking to God

In our lessons, we talked about different kinds of prayer: Adoration (expressing your love for God), Praise (God is great!), Thanksgiving (saying “thank you”), Repentance (being sorry when we’ve done something wrong), Intercession (asking for God’s help for others), Petition (asking for God’s help and guidance for yourself), and Oblation (offering ourselves to God, asking God to use us to help others). We talked about times when we can pray (church, meals, bedtime, when you are scared or worried, when something wonderful happens to you, *anytime!*) **The children made Prayer Books that you can use to help develop their prayer life at home.**

### November 13-20: Come Down Zacchaeus!

Zacchaeus, a despised chief tax collector, desperately wanted to see Jesus. When Jesus passed through Jericho, Zacchaeus climbed a tree so he could see over the crowds. Jesus stopped and spoke with Zacchaeus and told him that he would dine at Zacchaeus’ home. Many people did not understand why Jesus would dine with a sinner like Zacchaeus!

But Zacchaeus recognized his need for repentance because he had faith in Jesus as the Son of God. He was awed by God's love and forgiveness, and he responded by giving half his goods to the poor and paying back four times what he'd taken dishonestly.

- Jesus know *us* by name, too.
- Jesus came to seek those who were lost - not reject them.
- The children played games that focused on welcoming the "outsider".
- We are acting on Jesus' behalf when we show kindness to those who are often left out.
- **Is there someone you know who may feel left out or forgotten? How can you show special love toward them this week?**

## 2nd through 5th Grade

Each year at the end of Church School we sing a silly song about Father Abraham. Who was Abraham, and why is it important that he had many sons? Abraham (originally called "Abram") was called by God to leave his home and go on a journey - a journey to a place Abram knows nothing about. God promises that Abram will be made into a great nation and that all the people on earth would be blessed through him. But Abram must wait a very long time. Eventually, in her old age, his wife Sarah conceives and bears Abraham a son. They name the child Isaac since God brought laughter.

### October 23: Choosing the right path

- We are always making choices, and the older we get, the more critical those choices can be! How can our faith and trust in God help us to make better choices?
- Even though we are called to follow God's direction, it is not always immediately clear which route, or choice is best. What can we do when we are not sure which choice to make? (pray, ask the advice of people we trust)
- We are not always asked to make choices between right and wrong. Sometime we have to make choices between two correct paths. Then what do we do? (think about how your choice will impact others, cost or amount of time each will take).

- **Talk about what happens when you make a wrong turn using a GPS.** (It finds where you are and re-routes your trip to get you back on track). We may make mistakes and bad choices, even when we are trying to live a faithful life. What does God do when we stray from the right path? (God finds a way to provide choices so we can return to the path that leads to God's will).

November 6: Peace Makers (Genesis 13:1-18)

- Ask about the soda can experiment!
- It never really pays to blow your top. It's a lot smarter to learn how to handle conflicts and arguments so things get better – not worse.
- In today's story we saw what Abram did when he was faced with conflict. Rather than fighting for his rights, he chose to let his nephew Lot have the better piece of land. He knew God would take care of him.
- **What advice do you think Abram would give us about settling arguments?** (Think about the other person's feelings; don't always insist on your own way; be willing to compromise. Don't blow your top!)

November 13: Sons and Daughters of Abraham (Genesis 15:1-22:18)

- People of many faith traditions are united through Abraham. The nation of Israel and the Jewish people are descendants of his son Isaac, the Muslim people are descendants of his son Ishmael, and Christians receive the same blessing promised to Abraham through faith in Jesus. (Galatians 3:14)
- God promised that Abraham would have a very big family – as many descendants as the stars. As a Christian, you are one of those stars!
- **Are Abraham's descendants a blessing to all the nations of the earth? Why or why not?**
- Abraham and Sarah named their son "Isaac" which means, "Laughter". This was a good name for Isaac because Abraham and Sarah laughed when they learned that they would have a child in their old age! **What does your name mean?**

### November 1: The story continues (Genesis 21-50)

- The Patriarchs were the male leaders or “fathers” of a family or tribe. Abraham was the first great Patriarch of the Bible. When he died, leadership of the family was passed to Isaac and then to Isaac’s son Jacob.
- The 12 sons of Jacob, including Joseph, were also considered Patriarchs, or founding fathers of the 12 nations of Israel. They lived more than 1,500 years before Jesus.
- In Eucharistic Prayer C, we hear the names of the first great Patriarchs of the Bible – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The children played a game to help remember the genealogy of these men (the order they were born in) and what they are remembered for.
- **See if your family can identify each of the Patriarchs described below:**
  - ★ He tricked his father into giving him a blessing by covering his arms with fur. (Gen 27)
  - ★ He had twin sons (Gen 25)
  - ★ His wife, Sarah, had a child at a very old age (Gen 21)
  - ★ His name was changed to “Israel” (Gen 32)

### November 20: Give and Take (Isaiah 9:6)

- The prophet Isaiah lived many years before Jesus. He told the people about the coming “Messiah” or Savior.
- Isaiah told us that the Messiah will not judge us by how we look, or by what we say. Instead, he will be so wise that he will know what’s in our hearts and minds.
- The students played a “Give and Take” game that helped them to experience “hoarding” vs. “sharing.”
- **When the Messiah judges the people of the earth, will he look at those who have the most and decide they are the best? (Why or why not).**