

Letter to Families

Welcome to this season of the church year, which began on June 7, the week after Pentecost Sunday, and which ends on November 22, the Sunday before Advent.

During September we celebrate the *Season of Creation*. During these four weeks, children will be exploring the awesome creative power of God who “gives life and breath to all.” Each week they will focus on one aspect of creation, listening to what the Forests, Land, Wilderness/Outback, and Rivers can teach us about God and God’s ways. Consider setting up a nature table at home for these four weeks, adding items from the natural world or photos or pictures cut from nature calendars and magazines to represent forests, land, wilderness/outback, and rivers.

We encourage you to spend some time with your children, if possible, walking through a forest, exploring the different kinds of landscapes in your area, visiting a wilderness/outback area, and spending some time beside a river. What environmental projects could your family do together during these weeks to honour and explore one of these four aspects of creation?

In October and November we move into the last half of the *Season after Pentecost*. During October, children will hear some of the foundational stories of our faith from Exodus 20, 32, and 33, and Deuteronomy 34 about Moses and his leadership of the Hebrew people. In November, the children will hear three well-known parables from Jesus’ teachings, recorded in Matthew 25, about living in God’s way.

We invite you to read these stories from a children’s Bible at home. Invite your child to re-tell the stories as they were explored at church. Storytelling is important and through these stories children can begin to see how God works in their lives and in the lives of others. If possible, set aside time for storytelling as a family; telling your own stories and those from your family history, seeing how the Spirit moves in the telling.

One of the scripture readings for this season is the story of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments (found in Exodus 20). The following paraphrase of some of those commandments offers guidelines for loving God and one another. Consider posting it in your home during this season:

- Remember God is love and say God’s name with love.
- Take time to rest and to pray with God.
- Parents and children, love and care for one another.
- Respect all living things.
- Keep your promises to one another.
- Respect what belongs to another.
- Tell the truth about others.
- Be content with the good things of your own life.

We will be praying for your child during these weeks. We ask that you and your child pray for us as well as we prepare for and lead the sessions each week. May these months be ones of growth and discovery for your child and your family.

Blessings,

Suggested resources: *The Family Story Bible and Family Story Bible Colouring Book*, illustrated by Margaret Kyle, or *The Lectionary Story Bible, Year A*. For older children, *Read, Wonder, Listen: Stories from the Bible for Young Readers*. Both are available from the publisher of *Seasons of the Spirit* at www.woodlakebooks.com.