

SHINE families

Illustration by LaTonya Jackson



Jesus and the Children

Read the story of Jesus welcoming the children from Mark 10:13–16 or from *The Peace Table: A Storybook Bible*, pages 252–253. You can find out more about *The Peace Table* on the webpage that the QR code opens.

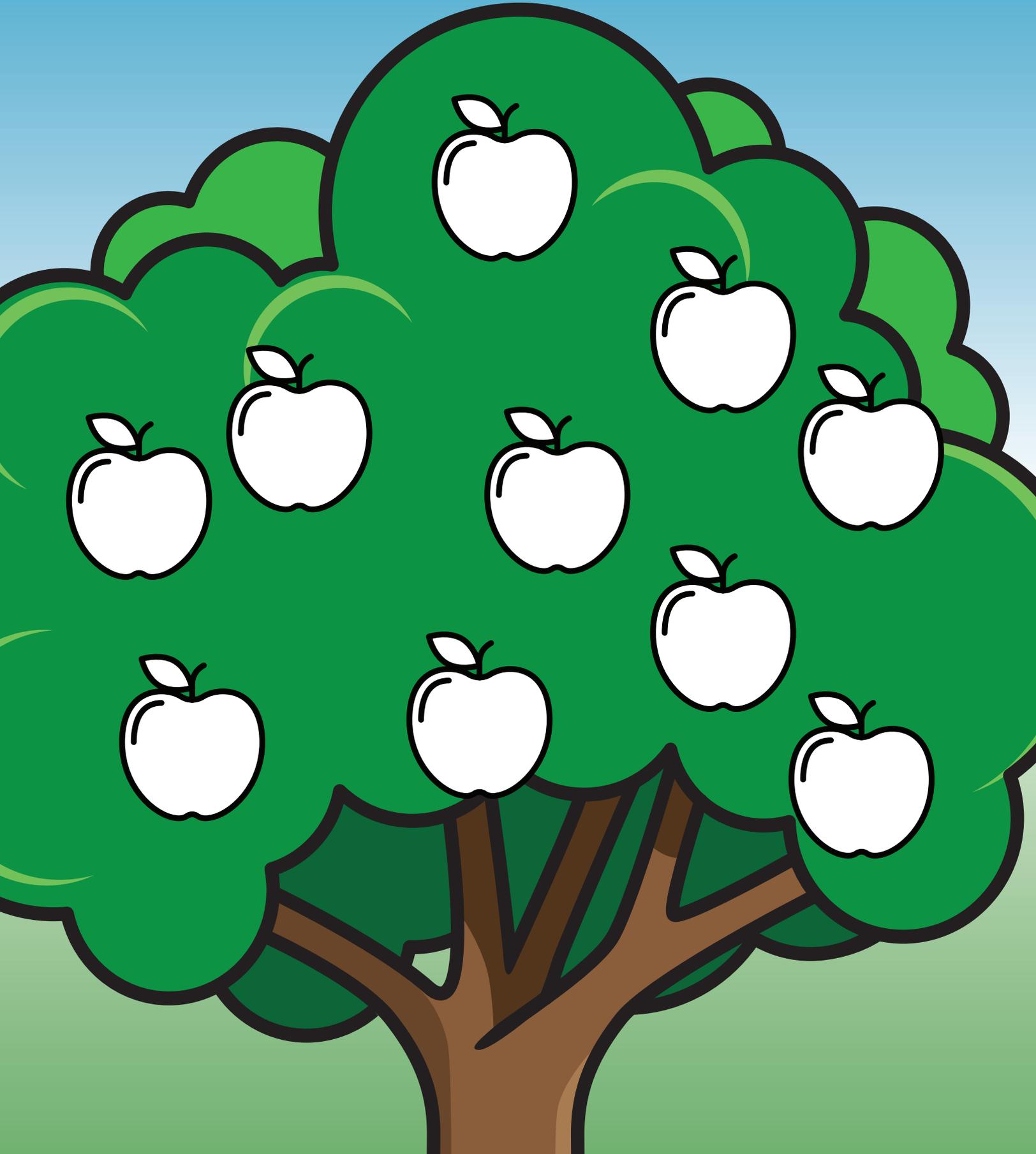
Read these wondering questions aloud and share your thoughts with each other.

- I wonder why the disciples tried to keep the children from coming close to Jesus.
- Jesus made the children feel welcome, loved, and safe. I wonder who makes you feel loved and safe.
- Imagine spending time with Jesus. I wonder what you talked about or what game you played.
- I wonder what the families remembered most about meeting Jesus.
- Take turns finishing this sentence: If I could tell Jesus anything today, I would say . . .

SHINE
everywhere

Growing in Faith

Place this poster of a tree where your family can see it. Each time your family prays together, reads a devotional, goes to a worship service, or participates in other faith-building activities, color in one of the apples on the tree.



Known and Loved

Set out paper and pencils so that people can each trace a hand on the paper. Cut out the hands. Print the words “I am loved by God” on the thumb and fingers of the hands, one word per thumb or finger.

Think about what you enjoy and what makes you special. Draw or write on your paper hands to show what makes you who you are—a person worth celebrating!

After looking at each other’s hands created for the “Known and Loved” activity, see if you can arrange time to spend with one another. Plan a fun and simple activity that connects with your interests. Being together is a wonderful way to celebrate what is special about each person.



Unique—Like Me!

Did you know that no one else has fingerprints just like yours? The skin on the ends of your thumbs and fingers have a unique pattern of lines.

We leave our fingerprints behind without even knowing it. That’s because sweat and oil on our fingers leave marks behind when we touch things.

Try the following experiment so you can see your fingerprints more easily.

1. Tear off a piece of clear tape and place it on a surface with the sticky part facing up.
2. Use a pencil to make a mark a little bigger than the size of your fingertip on a piece of paper. Fill in the mark to make it dark.
3. Rub your finger along your forehead close to your hairline so you can pick up some oil on your finger.
4. Press your finger on the pencil mark that you made. Rock it gently side to side so that most of your fingerprint is pressed onto the tape but try not to smudge your print.
5. Now that your fingertip is covered with pencil, press it gently onto the sticky side of the tape.
6. Peel off the tape and stick it on a clean paper. Press it down carefully.
7. Have a look! Can you see your fingerprint?

You can see a video of this activity and find out more about fingerprints by using the QR code on page 1.



Welcomed by Jesus

Jesus welcomed the children who wanted to see him. Imagine yourself as one of the children in the picture on the next page. Think of your friends who might like to talk with Jesus too. Color the picture as though you and your friends are in it.

Welcomed by Jesus



All the Colors of Our Lives

In any one day, we can have a wide range of feelings. It is good to be reminded that all we think and feel is known by God—our contentment, sadness, joy, worry, silliness, grief, courage, and anger. This practice invites us to connect to our feelings with colors and bring them all to God in prayer.

Find a container to decorate. You might want to tape pieces of colored paper to a jar or bowl or weave ribbons through a basket.

Now cut out small squares of white or colored paper. Set out colored pencils or crayons.

On the squares of paper, each person can draw or write prayers. Choose colors that express the emotions you feel as you write or draw your concerns, requests, or celebrations.

Over the coming month—perhaps after meals or during family nights—people can draw their prayers and add them to the container. Imagine God holding your prayers as the container holds your paper.

Close these reflection times with a prayer:

**God, we bring you all we think and feel,
knowing that you care for us. We trust you
to hold our prayers in your loving hands.
Amen.**



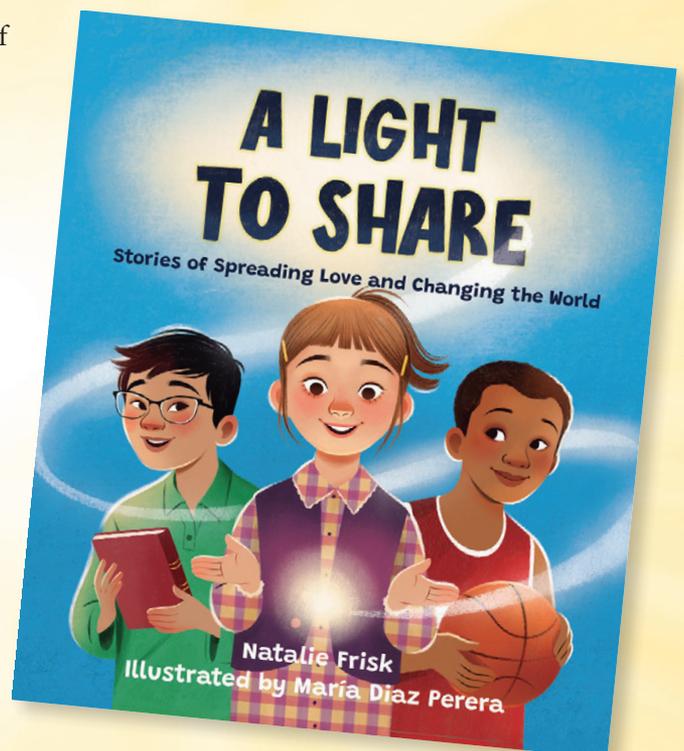
Picture Book Corner

A great way to nurture faith in children is to tell them stories of real people who love God and live out their faith. In *A Light to Share: Stories of Spreading Love and Changing the World* by Natalie Frisk, children are introduced to 12 followers of Jesus who share their gifts and make a difference in the world. Some stories are about people who lived long ago, while others are about people who are changing our world right now.

Faith connection:

Who do you know that shares the light of Jesus by sharing their gifts? What gifts do you have? What ideas do you have about how you could share your gifts with the world? Read Romans 12:1-8 (or *The Peace Table*, pages 316–317).

You can see some other books we'll be featuring in coming issues, on the page opened by the QR code.



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We're excited to share this folder with you—a simple guide to help your family grow in faith together. Each month through April, you'll receive a new Shine Families issue focusing on one practice that grows faith at home: Talk, Pray, Celebrate, Learn, Serve, or Worship.

These practices are proven to help families nurture faith at home. Our goal is to offer easy, joyful ways for your family to connect with God and each other—through stories, prayers, creative conversations, and simple activities suitable for a variety of ages.

The QR code at the bottom of this page opens a webpage of extras. This month, you'll find a video of how to make your fingerprint (see Unique—Like Me! inside) and a printable coloring page so each child can have their own. Sometimes, the most meaningful moments happen when you follow your child's lead, so look over the activities together and see what sparks their interest.

Remember, just like Jesus welcomed children with kindness and care, your presence and love are powerful ways to show God's love every day, even in the busiest moments. Thank you for all you do—your caring presence makes a true difference!

Blessings,
Shana Peachey Boshart
Shine Everywhere Project Facilitator



**Let the children
come to me, and
do not stop them,
because the
Kingdom of God
belongs to such as
these. I assure you
that whoever does
not receive the
Kingdom of God
like a child will
never enter it.**

—Mark 10:14–15 (GNT)



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