

Planning



Sunday, October 9 – Saturday, October 15 • 2022

With Loud Voices

We join along with the healed and redeemed by making a joyful noise to our God. We remember, too, that there are times where we must raise our voices and be loud about what God is doing.

This week...

Ecumenical prayer calendar

Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama

As listed in *Pilgrim Prayer: The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle*, edited by Ester Pudjo Widiastih and Karen L. Bloomquist. (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2018). <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle> offers valuable aids for intercessory prayers, prayer on behalf of and in solidarity with others.

Special days (commentary on p. 92)

October 9 – Sukkot begins (*Judaism*)

October 10 – Thanksgiving (*Canada*)

Alternate materials for [Thanksgiving](#) are on p. 15.

Personal reflection

The voices of those asking Jesus to heal them were loud. They had to be heard over the rest of the crowd. We use our voices in a variety of ways. We cry out in pain; we gasp in wonder and awe. We raise our voices to protest injustice and oppression. Loud voices can be used to seek attention as well as to shout for joy! We offer praise and prayer with our voices, and we give thanks to God with them. Sometimes it can be hard to raise our voices for what is right. We worry about being shamed, fought with, or ignored. Our passages for today remind us that God hears our voices and wants us to use them to proclaim God's work in the world.

The planning page is provided in text format for copying, adapting, and adding to your bulletin or online worship resources or website or social media (see Text folder, Worship Outline).

October 9, 2022

18th Sunday after Pentecost

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proper 23 (28)

Revised Common Lectionary (Year C)

Jeremiah 29:1, 4–7

Psalm 66:1–12

2 Timothy 2:8–15

Luke 17:11–19

the focus in age-level materials



Seasons of the Spirit™

is based on semi-
continuous readings of the
Revised Common Lectionary.

Liturgical colour green

Notes

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Online Resources

Lection Connection

Essays and discussion prompts linking current events with this week's scriptures. Use for sermon preparation, Bible studies, and small groups or share on social media at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/10/>.

Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home

An easy-to-share, weekly online resource supports the spiritual lives and faith formation of individuals and families at home. It is provided in the [Faith at Home](#) folder.





Jeremiah 29:1, 4–7
Psalm 66:1–12
2 Timothy 2:8–15
Luke 17:11–19
 the focus in age-level materials



Seasons of the Spirit™ is based on the semi-continuous readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

O God, you are the God who moves. You move over the waters of chaos and bring creation. You move ahead of us on our journeys through the wildernesses of life. You moved into the flesh, and you came to those of us others avoided. May you move in our hearts as well. Move us toward compassion. Move us toward peace. Move us toward thanksgiving. Amen.

With Loud Voices

God's faithfulness extends to all people and places. This is good news that continues to surprise. This week's scriptures explore some of these surprises and raise questions. How do healing and faith relate? What faithful response does God demand of a conquered and exiled people? Amid familiar congregational wrangling, where might we find Jesus, knowing that no chains of time or place can tie him down?

Jeremiah 29:1, 4–7 When the Babylonians forced all the religious and political leaders into exile, leaving only a few people behind in Jerusalem, Jeremiah dictates a letter to the exiles. It contains news the exiles don't want to hear. The prophet proclaims the word of God to be a word of the re-establishment of community. The people are to settle themselves and to invest in the place they have landed for the long haul. They are to attend to one another's needs, to seek the welfare of all in the land. They are to break bread and build families. A vital component of the establishment of community in this passage is also the establishment of hope.

The theme of God's universal love continues in **Psalm 66:1–12**, which invites all Earth to praise God. The psalmist invokes the Israelites' particular liberation narrative, the Exodus, and the broad embrace of God "whose eyes keep watch on the nations." Testifying to God's deeds past and present, the psalmist also implies that communal worship, praise, and blessing leads to individual thanksgiving and a desire to invite others to join in worshipping God.

2 Timothy 2:8–15 Timothy is reminded that though Jesus is a historical person, he is also "the word of God," which cannot be chained down. Timothy's insecurities and shame are addressed. He is urged to explain the word of truth to his community and help them avoid useless "wrangling over words."

Luke 17:11–19 The community of Jesus' day considered people with leprosy ritually unclean, outcasts, and likely to be possessed by evil spirits. They were forbidden to enter the temple or participate in religious or communal life until a priest certified them as clean. On the final leg of his journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, Jesus responds to the appeal of ten to have mercy. All ten refer to Jesus as "Master," recognizing him as a healer, and all respond immediately to his command to show themselves to the priest. As they follow Jesus' direction and head to the temple, they become clean.

Only one, a Samaritan, turns back to thank Jesus and praise God. Many readers may find Jesus' question, "But the other nine, where are they?" perplexing. Presumably, they are doing what Jesus told them to do: show themselves to the priest. What motivates the Samaritan to return? Of the ten with leprosy, the Samaritan (an outsider, a foreigner) returns. Perhaps he returns because he knows that boundaries have been put upon his participation in temple life as a Samaritan, a foreigner. Perhaps he returns because he alone comprehends the divine nature of the one who healed him. Like the story of Naaman, the leprous one in 2 Kings 5:1–19, Luke's story illustrates the same surprising message: that God's love extends to all, God's mercy knows no bounds.

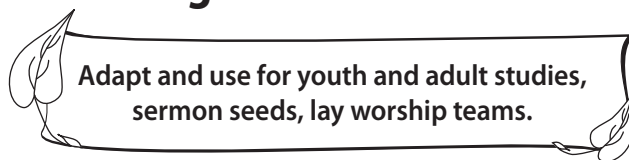
Clearly, more has happened to the Samaritan than being healed. Jesus asserts that his faith, his ability to recognize and rejoice in God's blessing of healing, makes him a full member of the faith community. In this way, Luke signals that the Samaritan's experience functions as a sign of the coming of God's reign.

• • • • •

Today's scriptures assert that God's love extends beyond all boundaries. They prompt us to wonder: If Jesus is not chained to history, then where can we find him in our world today? For what unexpected people and place does God call us to pray and work?



Reflecting on the Word



Connecting with life

Today, we find communities in many parts of the world becoming either more divided than in past decades or more aware of those divisions than ever before. Further, people seem to be living into those divisions and clinging to them.

- **Consider some of the divisions that exist in your community, nation, the world. What do you feel as you bring these to mind?**

Scripture

Jeremiah 29:1, 4–7 In Jeremiah's oracle instructing the Babylonian exiles to settle down, God indicates that during times of extended difficulty, grief and suffering, God's people can remain faithful to God's will. God commissions the exiled Israelites to seek the welfare of the captors.

- **Who lives in situations of exile today, separated from their land or culture?**
- **In what ways do we experience exile ourselves?**
- **What in this reading might we take for ourselves?**

Luke 17:11–19 When asked to describe the meaning of true worship, Martin Luther replied, "the tenth leper turning back."

- **Using this example as a starting point, in what ways could you further describe true worship?**

Consider this quote from Origen of Alexandria: "Holiness is seeing with the eyes of Christ."

The one who came back looked at Jesus and saw God. He understood the divine nature of the one who saved him, so he returns to give thanks.

- **Do you experience God as one who criticizes or one who accepts? one who condemns or one who forgives? a stern judge or a loving parent?**
- **How might we enhance our ability to see God, ourselves, and others "with the eyes of Christ"?**

Jesus is often portrayed as wandering the countryside to explore communities so that God's vision of togetherness might be realized in each part of the land.

- **Reflect upon your own communities. Who is excluded? What are the reasons?**
- **The Samaritan is told twice to "go." How is this our call to build a just and merciful community?**

Connecting scripture and life

Luke 17:11–19 concludes with Jesus saying, "Your faith has made you well."

- **How is gratitude manifest in your community of faith?**
- **How might gratitude enable your work, individually and as the church, of justice and care for all Creation?**

Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

Throughout history, people of faith have been tempted to put boundaries on God's love, to specify who is worthy to praise God in the house of worship, and how God is to be praised. And throughout the scriptures runs a theme that challenges this temptation, reminding God's followers of the wideness of God's mercy and love, which has the power to break down boundaries, reach across cultures, nations, and generations.

No doubt Jeremiah's command that the Hebrew exiles "seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile" disturbed his listeners, just as Luke's story about the Samaritan's healing must have struck a nerve with those

who heard it. Pray for our enemies and conquerors? Welcome into the faithful community those whom we have always considered our inferiors? What radical concepts!

Yet, many of us find ourselves in the community of faithful today because of God's radical insistence on breaking down boundaries and sharing the wideness of God's love. We can expect that God will continue to call us to seek the welfare of those we have reason to distrust and resent and welcome into our embrace those from whom we have distanced ourselves. This week's scriptures and worship may guide us on this frightening but faithful journey.



With Loud Voices

Prepare

NOTE: The following suggestions are mere starting points; adapt, delete, and add according to your local needs and context. If a community is gathered in person, they may speak the **bolded** lines. If worshippers are not all physically present, consider having a different individual say the bolded responses. Instructions are *italicized*.

- ❑ Recruit volunteers needed for worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Luke 17:11–19. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “Ten Are Healed” on p. 94 or “Jesus Heals” in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week’s materials. For the reflection, arrange for someone to present. For the dramatic presentation, arrange for a reader and volunteers to act the roles of Jesus and the ten with leprosy.
- ❑ Bring items for setting the worship space.
- ❑ You might choose to print Just as We Are One on or in your bulletin (in the Images to Project and Print folder). For background to the art and artist, see “Connecting with the Art” on p. 8.
- ❑ Bring song such as “I Am Sent by God/*Enviado Soy de Dios*” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8, #5 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 8. Printed music and recording also available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads*, www.seasonsonline.ca).
- ❑ Set stations as described on pp. 95–96.



Music Suggestions

I Am Sent by God/*Enviado Soy de Dios*

Traditional Cuban; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8

Let the People of God

Ken Medema; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

Ruth Duck; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5

Everyday Loving

Linnea Good; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5

Forever I Will Sing

Michael Mangan; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5

God Is the One We Trust

Maria Millward; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5

Be Thou My Vision

Ancient Irish

In Christ There Is No East or West

John Oxenham, Laurence Hull Stookey

Now Thank We All Our God

Martin Rinckart

We Gather Together

Ruth Duck and Michael Bausch



A chart that shows the licence holder(s) for each song in each of the 9 *Seasons of the Spirit* Music Volumes can be found at www.seasonsonline.ca. Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

Gather

Call to worship

Option: sing the refrain of “Forever I Will Sing” before this call to worship and then sing the entire hymn following (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5. Printed music is available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads*, www.seasonsonline.ca).

Come and sing the praise of our wondrous God.

Awesome and marvellous are God’s works!

Come and celebrate God who refreshes us and brings us new life.

Awesome and marvellous are God’s works!

Be joyful, and celebrate the goodness of God here and everywhere.

Awesome and marvellous are God’s works!

Come, let us worship God.

Opening prayer

God of mystery and wonder,
you are with us

in times of glory and uncertainty,
times of healing, and times of doubt.

As we worship you this day,
help us to remember that you are with us
in all of the twists and turns of our lives,
the unexpected and the routine.

Lead us to praise you and give you thanks
in all times and places.

We pray in the name of Christ Jesus,
healer and friend. Amen.



Worship Outline • October 9, 2022

Prayer of confession

God, we feel torn between wanting to praise you,
and feeling ashamed of our faith in you.
Sometimes, we feel torn between trusting you and
raging against you,
Especially when we suffer from illness or displacement
or with feeling trapped in circumstances beyond our control.
We sometimes find ourselves blaming you
or blaming ourselves for not having a strong enough faith
to get the answers we want to our prayers.
Sometimes we feel jealous of your good news, God,
and want to keep it to ourselves.
We can't believe the people you want us to share it with:
strangers, and people who don't know you, and even our
enemies.
Forgive us, God. Amen.

Words of affirmation

God has not created us for discord but has formed us for
harmony.
**God does not sentence us to ignorance but opens us to
understanding.**
God does not send us into isolation but welcomes us into
community.
God, the Creator of every family in heaven and Earth,
desires peace on Earth and righteousness, joy and love.
**Blessed be God, whose mercy is from everlasting to
everlasting,**
blessed be God, who reaches across all divisions.
**Blessed be God, who forgives us, renews us, and makes
us whole. Amen.**

Engage

Opening the word

2 Timothy 2:8–15 encourages the early church by affirming that God's goodness is present even in difficulty. God's word, God's activity, God's love, and God's call remain unfettered! As a community of Christian faith, we come alongside one another in times of difficulty and distress to remember Jesus raised from the dead and God's presence with us.

The author states that joining our lives with Christ's means that we will inherit Christ. Yet, if we deny him, he will deny us. This is not tit-for-tat and not a way of saying that God turns away from us. If we stay in a darkened house and never go out into the light of day, did the light turn away from us? The choice is ours whether we turn to God and seek help or not. Help is always there.

Consider this saying: "If you don't feel close to God, guess who moved?" 2 Timothy invites us into the challenge and joy of being God's people, travelling on the path of Christ.

Luke 17:11–19 *the focus scripture for age-level materials in ENCORE*

Introduction Remind the congregation that Jews considered Samaritans as outsiders of right belief, right living, and nearness to God in biblical times. Invite them to think of people in our time who often are considered in that way.

The story in this week's gospel reading helps orient us in our time to people who are different from us.

Choose from the following.

Bible story Have a storyteller present the story "Ten Are Healed" on p. 94. Alternatively, for younger children, tell

the story "Jesus Heals" (in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week's materials).

Reflection on Luke 17: 11–19 Samaritans were not considered part of the in-crowd. Even so, when Jesus heals ten with leprosy, it is a Samaritan who comes back to thank him. Jesus calls our attention to the fact that this is a "foreigner" who comes back to thank him. What are we to make of this?

Think of a world where people are warring with one another, inciting violence against each other as if to say, "My God is stronger than your God." Historically, Christians have waged such wars. Muslim extremists and other "fringe" groups are doing it in our time. Any religious perspective can be used either for violence or championing peace in the human community. Will Jesus want us to exclude people who champion peace if they do not use his name to do it? Or will he call positive attention to those outside the Christian faith who share his teaching and values?

On Monday, October 29, 2018, a gunman stormed The Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where the Jewish congregation was worshipping; 11 people were killed, and many others were wounded. This marked the worst event of anti-Semitic violence ever in America. Shortly after, a Muslim nonprofit group initiated and raised one million dollars to support the recovering Jewish community, providing funds to pay funeral expenses for the deceased and medical expenses for the wounded. They announced that shared humanity was more important than religious difference and that coming together in opposition to violence was paramount.



Talk about healing! We can stand with all who stand for peace, knowing that Jesus stands with us.

Drama Have someone read the scripture passage. Create a dramatic presentation, with volunteers acting roles of Jesus and the ten with leprosy.

If gathering in person, invite children, young people, and all who wish to move to the stations. Others will remain seated for proclaiming the word. For those participating at home, you might encourage them to use materials that have been sent.

Respond

Sing or listen to a song such as “I Am Sent by God” as people gather together again (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8, #5 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 8. Printed music and recording are also available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads*, www.seasonsonline.ca).

Prayers of the people

God of healing and hope, we raise our voices to say thank you. For the wonder of creation, for the ways we encounter you each day.

We raise our prayers today that you will help us use our voices.

In places of injustice or oppression, may we speak your truth and liberation.

In places of despair and hopelessness, may we speak your hope.

In places where there is injury and hurt, may we speak your healing.

We raise our voices in prayer today for (*you may name specific situations, people, intercessions*).

We pray in the name of the One whose voice we echo. Amen.

Invitation to the offering

God has brought us to a spacious place. Wherever we find ourselves, God calls us to praise God and to commit our resources to the well-being of Earth and community life. In gratitude to God, whose love knows no bounds, let us respond by giving our tithes and offerings.

Prayer of dedication

Loving God, we come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all we are and all we have are gifts from you. In faith and love, help us to do your will. We offer to you this day all the facets of our lives. May we grow in wisdom and insight to understand your will for us. We offer gifts of time, talent, and possessions to reflect our love for you and our neighbour. Help us to reach out to others as you, our God, reach out to us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Bless

Offer praise to God now and at all times,
and remember Christ Jesus,
so that in whatever circumstances you find yourself

you may know what is truly life, holy and whole,
and by the power of God's Spirit, bring it into all places.
Amen.

Special Day Commentary

October 9 – Sukkot

Sukkot (or “Sukkoth” – both pronounced “soo-KOTE”) is one of the Jewish festivals most closely tied to Judaism's agricultural roots. The Torah mentions the observance of Sukkot in Leviticus 23:33–35. Many scholars believe this harvest festival was the most important one in temple times.

Jews celebrate this seven-day festival by building a mobile booth (*sukkah*) in their yards. It has solid walls but a

thatched roof that enables those who dwell in it to see the stars at night. The *sukkah* connects us to the harvest nature of the festival, as well as a mythic piece of our past, reminding us of the booths the Israelites lived in as they wandered the wilderness for forty years. The commandment regarding Sukkot is to either eat or dwell in the *sukkah* – as many Jews do – and to utilize four species of harvest: the myrtle, willow, palm, and etrog (citron) in a dance-like waving ritual.

– Rabbi Adam Morris



Gratitude

*If the only prayer we ever said was "Thank-you"
it would be enough.*
– Meister Eckhardt

Life is given to us; every moment is given. The only appropriate response therefore is gratefulness. When we wake up to the fact that everything is a gift, it is only natural to be thankful and to look on everything that happens as a chance to respond to the Given Life. – David Steindl-Rast *Music of Silence*

Obviously, it can be extremely hard to practice gratitude when we are in the depths of pain or grief. Ironically, it can also be difficult to practice gratitude when life is going well. Somehow, when life is hard we tend to blame God, curse life. And when life is easy, we are more likely to grow forgetful and believe we've done it all ourselves.

A gratitude practice helps us remain conscious of the bigger reality that surrounds us – a reality larger than the individual events of our lives. We can regain a wider perspective by remembering – with gratitude – the miracle that is life.

Practicing gratitude is not to deny hardship or suffering. It's not to be oblivious of the staggering ways we each and all fall short of actualizing a just and peaceful world. It's definitely not insurance against calamity.

Julian of Norwich's assertion that all shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well is not naïveté. It is not hope for certain outcomes. It is an abiding hope which is grounded in the reality of the Holy One – that no matter what is happening around us, somehow the Beloved is with us, and therefore at the deepest levels of soul, all shall be well.

This kind of hope is in symbiotic relationship with gratitude. They affect and nourish each other. Cynthia Bourgeault writes, "When we enter it [mystical hope], it enters us and fills us with its own life – a quiet strength beyond anything we have ever known."

Being grateful even for a few small things is an act of hope, and holding hope is a critical aspect of spiritual life.

This deep and abiding hope in Life and in Love – in spite of all evidence to the contrary – affects not only the quality of our individual lives but has a positive impact that ripples out around us. The practice of experiencing and expressing gratitude helps maintain our perspective, courage, and hope – all things that empower us and sustain our life-giving actions (our work) in the world.

A Gratitude Practice – for the Evening

1. Sit comfortably, take a few mindful breaths, and centre yourself.
2. Reflect on any challenging times, people, situations, or news from the day. Recall anything you regret doing or not doing, and notice the thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations that arise as you recount this experience (or experiences).
3. Breathe in and know it is life itself that enters you. Let this life-breath bring healing, forgiveness, and love to the raw or tender places in you. Exhale and release any residual "negativity" from the day.
4. Reflect on the joys of the day: good news, meaningful conversations and encounters, work well done, blessings received. Notice the thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations that arise as you recount these moments.
5. Breathe in, knowing it is life itself that enters you. Allow this life-breath to inspire your gratitude for everything – challenge and blessing. Breathe out gratitude for the gift of the day, and allow the love, forgiveness, healing, blessing, and grace that you have received pour through you and out into the world and all those around you.
6. Express your gratitude to the Author of Life. You might do this through prayer, contemplation, writing, chanting/singing, dancing, or drawing/painting. Offer something back in appreciation for the life you've been given. A silent thank you can be enough.

Going Beyond Words: 10 Practices for Spiritual Unfolding
by Lois Huey-Heck. Copyright © 2010 Lois Huey-Heck,
Wood Lake Publishing Inc. Used by permission.



Ten Are Healed

Based on Luke 17:11–19

The dust stuck to Jesus' legs as he continued to trudge down the dusty path. He was on his way to Jerusalem, and it had been a long day. He was hot, his body was tired, and his feet hurt. As the sun beat down on him, Jesus drank the last few drops from his waterskin. Good thing there was a village ahead; perhaps he could find more water there and maybe a bit of cheese for the road.

As he entered the village, he saw a group of people coming towards him. As tired and exhausted as Jesus was feeling, it was clear these people felt worse. Their torn clothing revealed open sores all over their bodies, their skin blotchy and covered in scabs. Flies were landing on them, and many could barely walk, their feet swollen and bleeding. They had a horrible disease. People didn't understand it. There was no medicine for it, and it could spread from one person to another quickly, so when someone got sick, they had to leave and live away from anyone healthy. They couldn't even hug their loved ones goodbye. People were afraid to be near them, even look at them, and they were often treated worse than the stray dogs that roamed the streets.

They recognized Jesus but stopped themselves from getting any closer since it was against the rules. They simply cried out to him, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! Help us!"

Jesus looked down at his own body. As dirty and tired as it was, it was healthy. Jesus felt so much love and so much sadness for these sick men and women. "Go," he said to them. "Show yourselves to the priests." Although confused, they obeyed and turned and walked toward the centre of the town. Within a few steps, they were no longer limping! As they walked, their bodies were healed. They all realized what had happened and looked down at their whole, healthy bodies in amazement. They were so thrilled and amazed they ran off as quickly as they could, some still headed toward the priests, others toward home and the families they had left behind.

One man was skipping and laughing when he suddenly stopped and held very still. He looked down at his hands, his ten perfect fingers, and he turned around. Jesus was still standing there, a warm smile on his face. The man ran back to Jesus and fell at his feet, crying and thanking him. Jesus put his hand on his shoulder and watched as the nine others disappeared in the distance. "Only one of you remembered to say thank you?" he chuckled. Helping the man to his feet, he said, "Get up and go on your way, my friend. Your faith has made you well."

As the man followed the others into the town, shouting about the miracle of his healthy body, Jesus sat down on a rock to rub his tired feet. Before he stood up to continue on his way, he thanked God for his energetic and healthy body.

A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



Bible story

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Paper or drawing pads
- Recording of today's story "Ten Are Healed"
- Alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

The practice of storytelling

Directions

1. Listen to the story "Ten Are Healed."
2. Write or draw about a time when you were ill or not able to go to school or church.



Living, Learning, Growing as Disciples

The following stations might be set up around your worship space, or in other places around the church, in your home, or outdoors. Choose one or more practices, depending on your space and numbers. Display the directions for all to see onscreen or in person. Adapt stations for use when physically distancing and above all, follow the safe practices of your congregation and local health officials.

For your convenience, directions are formatted for printing and available in the Stations folder.

Health and Safety Practices



Basic supplies pens, pencils, markers, crayons, white glue/glue sticks, scissors, hand sanitizer, wipes placed in a basket or bin, two containers marked “clean” and “used”



Setting the space Utilize large spaces where people can maintain a safe physical distance. Spread out chairs around a large table or use tape to mark off the space around stand alone chairs.



Keep it clean Wipe down and disinfect places used for stations. Provide enough arts and crafts supplies to reduce sharing and mark containers “clean” and “used.” Remind people to use hand sanitizer as they begin and as they end stations.

Grateful tree craft

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Construction paper
- Leaf-shaped cardboard template
- Yarn or string
- Hole punch
- Fine-point marker
- Small tree branch



Suitable for all ages working together

The practice of prayer

Directions

1. Trace and cut out several leaf-shaped construction paper leaves.
2. Together discuss what and for whom we are thankful/grateful. (Move beyond the surface and share examples of what it feels like to be appreciated.) Share examples of times when you have felt genuinely appreciative.
3. Write examples of thankfulness on the leaf shapes and fix them to the tree.
4. Close with a thank you prayer.

Say “Thank you”

Materials

- Basic supplies
- A welcoming space with battery votive candles
- Bibles or copies of Luke 17:11–19



Suitable for all ages working together

The practice of thanksgiving

Directions

1. Read Luke 17:11–19. Reread the passage, paying particular attention to verse 15: “Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.”
2. Make a list of reasons to turn around and say, “Thank you” to God.
3. Look at your list, choose a few of the reasons and turn them into a prayer of thanksgiving.

Younger children Draw for whom and what you are thankful.



Welcoming people back to church

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Blank cards
- Paper
- Envelopes
- Stickers or stamps of fun images
- Box for placing notes or cards



**Suitable for
all ages**

The practice of hospitality

Directions

Arrange for someone from your pastoral care committee to collect the envelopes for delivery.

1. Think of people you have not seen in church recently – this might include people who have had a life transition such as a new baby or family loss or someone who has recently started visiting your congregation.
2. Write a note expressing that you had missed seeing them and hoping you will see them again soon. You might offer an invitation to a specific church event. If you know that someone has been away because of illness or other difficult time, share your concern.
3. Place the notes in envelopes, and add the name.
4. Place your envelope in the box provided for someone from the pastoral care committee to collect and deliver.

Younger children Write or draw a message to someone you have missed.

Aesop's Androcles fable

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Copy of Aesop's *Androcles* fable
- Bibles or copies of Luke 17:11–19
- Paper
- Personal journals (optional)



**Suitable for
ages 6–adult**

The practice of gratitude

Directions

1. Read or have someone read to the full group the Aesop's fable. Reflect on or discuss:
 - **What are the messages told in this story?**
2. Read Luke 17:11–19.
3. Reflect on or discuss:
 - **What are the messages in this story?**
 - **How are these two stories alike and different?**
4. Discuss or write in journals or on individual sheets of paper about ways we can show our thanks to God and others.

The article "[Connecting with the Art](#)" on page 8 provides background to this season's posters and art engagement ideas for individuals and groups. You might add an Art station and select one of the art engagement ideas.



Story and activities for the very young to use in church or at home.

Jesus Heals

A story based on Luke 17:11-19

One day, ten very sick people were sitting by the side of the road. They were lonely. They couldn't be with their families because they had a skin disease, and others were afraid of getting the disease, too.

While they were talking to each other, they noticed Jesus and his friends coming down the road. "Look!" said one. "Jesus has helped other people. Maybe Jesus will help us. Let's call out to him."

And so, all together, the ten people cried out, "Jesus! Please help us!" Jesus stopped and listened. Do you think that Jesus would help them? Yes, he did! Jesus walked right up to the sick people, smiled, and said,

"You will get better. Go and show yourselves to the priest."

The ten sick people turned around to do what Jesus said. They looked down at their hands and feet. Something amazing had happened! Their sores had disappeared!

They jumped up and danced and danced! "Praise God!" they shouted. Then they quickly ran off to tell the priest so that everyone would know that they had been healed.

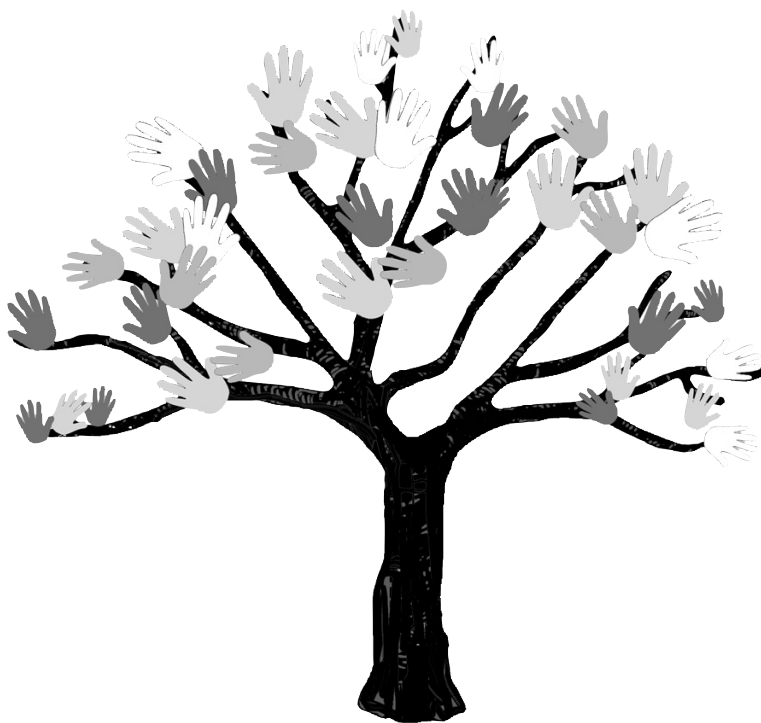
Jesus was still standing there, a warm smile on his face. One person ran back to Jesus and knelt down. "Thank you! Thank you!" he said.

Thank you tree

You will need scissors, poster board, two sheets of construction paper, extra construction paper for friends and family who might join in, markers, glue.

Directions

- Draw a tree shape on the poster board.
- Place two sheets of construction paper together. Fold in half.
- Place your hands on the folded construction paper and have someone trace around your hands.
- Cut out the hand shapes, or have someone help you to do that.
- Think of the things for which you are thankful.
- As you name each thing, glue one of your "hand-leaves" to the tree.
- Invite others to add their thank you leaves, too.



Jesus was still standing there, a warm smile on his face. One person ran back to Jesus and knelt down. "Thank you! Thank you!" he said.

Use markers or pencils or crayons to decorate the picture of the ten that were healed.

