

Planning



Sunday, October 30 – Saturday, November 5 • 2022

The Strength of Our Witness

In the just call of a prophet, the patience of a psalmist, and a moment when one in a tree and one on the ground meet, we consider the many ways God's love is made visible in our daily lives, in the community, and the world.

This week...

Ecumenical prayer calendar

Canada, the United States of America

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. 128)

October 31 – Reformation Day*

October 31 – All Hallows' Eve

November 1 – All Saints Day*

November 2 – All Souls Day

*For resources for All Saints and Reformation, go to www.seasonsonline.ca, click on the Library tab.

Personal reflection

Jesus' visit to Zacchaeus' house demonstrates God's love is shown in our hospitality. Zacchaeus was viewed by many as a sinner and even unclean because of his interactions with the Romans. Jesus calls Zacchaeus by name – knowing what is in his heart, even as the crowd grumbles.

■ **Whom might you invite to your home for a meal this week?**

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 30, 2022

21st Sunday after Pentecost

31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proper 26 (31)

Revised Common Lectionary (Year C)

Habakkuk 1:1–4, 2:1–4

Psalm 119:137–144

2 Thessalonians 1:1–4, 11–12

Luke 19:1–10

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

- ☐ _____
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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.





Habakkuk 1:1–4, 2:1–4
Psalm 119:137–144
2 Thessalonians 1:1–4, 11–12
Luke 19:1–10
 the focus in age-level materials



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

God, inspirer of zeal, keeper of promises, sustainer of faith; grant us strength, grant us wisdom, grant us hope, we pray. Amen.

For All Saints Day and Reformation Day materials, go to www.seasonsonline.ca, click on the Library tab.

The Strength of Our Witness

Pervasive, debilitating, and deeply systemic disorders have physical, social, and economic manifestations and spiritual ones. This is true for individuals, as well as for institutions and groups of people. Hope for change, and an end to attitudes and actions of injustice, arises from many locations – not the least from the human soul. The story of Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus, along with unexpected transformations, is cause for joy, hope, and renewed patience by those who seek and work for the righting of relationships, the building of healthy community, and the healing of creation today.

In **Habakkuk 1:1–4, 2:1–4**, the prophet feels frustration with injustice, destruction, and violence; and gives voice to the turmoil the people are experiencing. Habakkuk, as other prophets and the psalmists do, questions God and offers a different perspective on the actions of the Divine: "How long will I call for help and you not listen?" (1:2). However, amid the anxiety of wondering if God will act, the prophet still calls the people to stand watch, offering hope for God's wisdom.

The poet of **Psalm 119:137–144** contemplates the nature of the world. Some abide by God's commandments, and some do not. The "stress and strain" of living in a world with these dual perspectives has caught up to the psalmist (119:143), who concludes that the way of God is the way of life and who wants to be immersed in that perspective – "Help me understand so I can live!" (119:144b, *Common English Bible*).

Luke 19:1–10 While passing through the city of Jericho, Jesus encounters a person of great riches and small stature, someone held in disdain. He is Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, a franchise owner who prepays the allotted Roman tax and hires collectors to recoup his costs plus a profit. Because he works for the Romans at the expense of his own people, he is perceived as morally corrupt and ritually unclean.

Zacchaeus runs against all social conventions of the time and climbs a tree to get a better view of Jesus. Surprisingly, Jesus calls Zacchaeus' by name and breaches social etiquette by inviting himself to this stranger's house. In the Mediterranean world, it is considered an honour to be the host. In Lebanon today, a host greets a guest by saying *tsharrafna*, "you honour us." Jesus must honour Zacchaeus by being his guest. In turn, Zacchaeus welcomes Jesus and experiences joy.

Encountering Jesus is transformational for Zacchaeus; not only does Jesus affirm Zacchaeus' biological descent, but he also affirms his spiritual identity. But what about transformation in those onlookers who are quick to judge Zacchaeus' guilt? No doubt they had intentions to love God and neighbour (as their faith taught). But that faith knowledge had not yet truly been transformed into behaviour to others who differed in appearance, social class, occupation, or associations. What transformation is possible in them? And what genuinely loving, non-judgmental, inclusive, and productive relationships can be formed in the future among them all? As Jesus declares, salvation – as well as community – includes everyone.

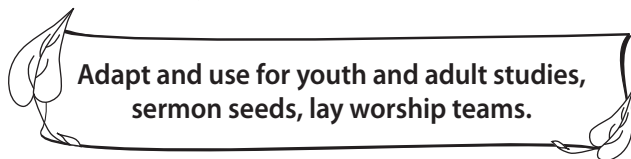
The introduction to **2 Thessalonians 1:1–4, 11–12** praises a community for its steadfastness in the face of persecution. The writer is thankful for the connection between the "faith growing abundantly" and the community's growing love.

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God's love is made visible in many ways, through a changed life, the charity of an individual, the call of the prophet, the patience of a psalmist, and the change of perceptions and growing intimacy of a community. We find an inner and shared strength when we recognize and give thanks for how individual and collective beings in creation witness to God's abundant grace every day. Consider the many ways God's love is made visible in your day, in your community and the world.



Reflecting on the Word



Connecting with life

- If you were to create a book title that captured feelings and emotions of waiting with anticipation and expectation, what would it be?
- If you were to create a book title that captured feelings and emotions of being ostracized, excluded, oppressed, what would it be?

Scripture

Habakkuk 1:1–4, 2:1–4 begins with a cry for help against injustice. The cry is answered with a call to make a vision of justice plain and visible to all.

- What does this cry sound like from an individual? from your community?
- What does the vision look like if you were to make it visible?

Psalms 119:137–144 draws on a love of God's instructions and the promise of God's eternal covenant through them to help the psalmist through difficult times and trusting God's law as the perspective from which we can live faithfully and with righteousness.

- What foundational pieces of scripture have formed your perspectives on life? ...on justice? ...on relationship with God and one another?

The psalmist is angered by those who have forgotten God's instructions and have a different perspective.

- When have another person's perspectives angered you?
- When have your perspectives angered someone?
- How might we bridge such chasms?

Luke 19:1–10 explores questions of wealth, need, and equity.

- If you were to put this into a contemporary setting, who might be Zacchaeus?
 - Who might be the grumbling crowd?
 - What actions can both take to restore each other to be in community together?
- "Zacchaeus" means "innocent" or "clean." How does this influence your understanding of the text?**

The Greek text of Luke 19:8 is in the present tense. Some scholars suggest that rather than Zacchaeus offering changed behaviour, he may be telling Jesus how he currently does things: "I give half my belongings to the poor, and if I ever cheat anyone, I pay..."

- How do perceptions of the characters in this story change when reading the verse this way?

In **2 Thessalonians 1:1–4, 11–12** Paul prays for the church members in Thessalonica so that their lives may bear witness to the way of Christ.

- How has your faith or love for others been affected by prayer?
- How could we be affected by a community in whom our primary connection is through our prayer for them?

Connecting scripture and life

Consider the ways you, individually and as a community, tend to and witness to God's transforming love.

- Where might this witness be needed?
- What acts of welcome might help restore and transform your community?

Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

Regardless of age and circumstance, we know what it is to wait with great anticipation or expectation; for an event, a visitor, or something to change. Some of us are ostracized, excluded, oppressed.

The story of Zacchaeus embodies expectation, anticipation, transformation. It witnesses to the inclusive love

and welcome that transforms. How does your community show others the effect that God has on life? Where and in what situations might challenge you to "climb a tree" so you might see from a different perspective? In worship, learning, and serving this week, we celebrate that we are all children of God.



The Strength of Our Witness

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: two for the call to worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Luke 19:1–10. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “Lunch with Zacchaeus” on p. 130 or “Jesus’ Friend, Zacchaeus” in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week’s materials. For the inter-play, arrange for a narrator to conduct the spontaneous interaction.
- ❑ 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 a Child of God” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8, #13 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. 131–132.



Music Suggestions

Companions on the Journey

Cary Landry; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8

I Am a Child of God

Bruce and Cheryl Harding, *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8

Come and Follow Me

Tom Franzak, *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5

One God Created All That Is

Daniel Charles Damon; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 3

What Does Our God Require of Us?

Jim Strathdee; *Seasons Songbook* vol. 3

Kyrie Eleison

Traditional Russian; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 2

Change My Heart, O God

Eddie Espinosa

Draw the Circle Wide

Gordon Light

Here I Am, Lord

Daniel L. Schutte

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Anonymous

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

Lesbia Scott



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

VOICE 1: Jesus travelled to many places.

VOICE 2: Some made him welcome. Others did not.

VOICE 1: Yet in all places, Jesus tried to make others feel welcomed.

VOICE 2: Jesus seldom missed a chance to tell someone that they were a beloved child of God.

VOICE 1: And so in Jesus’ name, we welcome you here,

VOICE 2: beloved children of our Creator.

VOICE 1: When we welcome one another, indeed, we welcome Jesus the Christ into our midst as well. (*If it is appropriate in your tradition, you may invite people to pass the peace or to greet one another at this time.*)

VOICE 2: Community of Christ, let us worship God.

Opening prayer

We welcome you,
Spirit of Christ,
to pass by this way
and call us into your justice.

We welcome you,
Spirit of Christ,
to challenge our ways and renew our living.

We welcome you,
Spirit of Christ,
to call our names and inform us in your community. Amen.



Worship Outline • October 30, 2022

Prayer of confession

Introduction to the prayer The book of the prophet Isaiah offers an outline for worship; we come into God's presence, stand in awe of God's glory, realize we lack integrity and are in need of correction and change. In God's presence and aware of our imperfection, we are invited to participate in a time of confession.

You might pause for silent reflection after each petition. In addition, you might sing the familiar words of the "Kyrie Eleison" at the end of each silent reflection.

O God, hear our prayer.

Receive our impatient yearnings and remorse, and hear our intentions to turn to you so we might truly live.

For our unrighteous pride and overdependence on ourselves...

For the injustices toward others or Creation, we ignore or even participate in...

For the unjust judgments we make of others, particularly those whom we oppose...

For our impatience with others and with you...

For our doubt that you will act, and the hopelessness we feel at your delay...

In your mercy, hear O God, and forgive. Amen.

Words of affirmation

The writer of Psalm 119 reminds us that "God's righteousness lasts forever! and, even though stress and strain catch up with us, God's commandments are a joy!"

We have hope of God's grace and for God's realm to break out here and throughout Creation.

Thanks be to God.

Engage

Opening the word

2 Thessalonians 1:1–4, 11–12 Some churches will be celebrating All Saints Day. Perhaps this invites us to consider the author's words about giving thanks for others, even "bragging" about others (1:3), and that doing so "is only right because faithfulness is growing...and the love for each other is increasing" (1:3). Within this week's theme of "the strength of our witness," we might ask ourselves: Who are the saints whose love has helped us to see the world anew? to know God anew? to experience life anew? We can have tendencies to be rigid in our beliefs, but authentic love experienced from another person can relax those tendencies.

Luke 19:1–10 *the focus scripture for age-level materials in*
ENCORE

Choose from the following.

Bible story Have a storyteller present the story "[Lunch with Zacchaeus](#)" on p. 130. Alternatively, for younger children, tell the story "[Jesus' Friend, Zacchaeus](#)" (in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week's materials).

Inter-play Invite people to imagine they are in the story. Explain that you will pause after each section and pose a question, inviting their response. Suggest they respond in the first person.

Vv. 1–4: You are Zacchaeus; why do you want to see Jesus?

Vs. 5: You are Jesus; why must you stay at Zacchaeus' house today?

Vs. 6: You are a member of the crowd; what is your response to this exchange? Why?

Vv. 7–8: You are a member of the crowd; what would you like to say to Zacchaeus?

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 a Child of God" as people gather together again (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8, #13 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 8. Printed music and recording are also available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads*, www.seasonsonline.ca).

Prayers of the people

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, we give thanks for this church and for the communities of people who live in faith in

all their diversities.

We pray that faith will grow abundantly.

We lift the brokenness that both diminishes and increases our understandings of faith.

We especially pray for those growing their faith in times of trial (*list names and or circumstances*).

We give thanks for the love that is ever-increasing between people in our midst.



We lift the celebrations of lives and loves in our community
(list anniversaries, birthdays, and other celebrations).

We lift the reconciliations that are happening around us
and abroad.

Help us fulfill the work of faith so that the good Creator,
the loving Redeemer, and the sustaining Spirit are
glorified. Amen.

Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

We give ourselves and our possessions with zeal because
our spirits seek what is truly real.

In love, in faith, in community, in mercy, you reveal to us a
new way of belonging, of being, or becoming the realm
of God. Bless us and those around us in all these ways.
Amen.

Bless

We come from God's Shalom,
we experience the hospitality of Christ,
we travel the way of Spirit's justice.

May we live as people who have encountered the love of
God and have been changed.

Go in peace.

Special Days Commentary

October 31 – Reformation Day

On the night of October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed the 95 theses – a proposal to debate the doctrine and practice of indulgences – to the castle church door in Wittenberg, Germany, beginning what became known as the Protestant Reformation. Accordingly, this date has significance for churches of the reformed tradition.

Luther chose this night knowing that many people would be attending church the next day – All Saints Day – and would thus read his statements of concern about the church. Some Protestant churches not of the reformed tradition choose October 31 (or the Sunday prior) to honour “Saints of the Reformation Era,” broadening the observance to include others.

Note: *Seasons of the Spirit* includes a complete set of worship resources for those churches wishing to observe Reformation Sunday, go to www.seasonsonline.ca, click on the Library tab.

November 1 – All Saints Day

November 2 – All Souls Day

In many churches, All Saints Day (November 1) celebrates all people of faith, recalling how, in New Testament usage, the word saints refers to Christians collectively, as well as those people of special significance who have been set apart by the church or canonized. It is the recognition of the common bond of Christians, both living and dead, and the common bond of the church here on Earth and the church triumphant in heaven. If November 1 falls on a weekday, All Saints Day is generally observed the following Sunday.

For those traditions who use All Saints Day to commemorate canonized saints or those whose lives have been particularly Christ-like, All Souls Day on November 2 provides an opportunity to remember other Christians who have died. A simple, reflective service can provide an opportunity to invite those who have been bereaved during the year to gather to remember their loved ones in prayer.

The night before All Saints Day was originally known as All Hallows' Eve and, over time, became shortened to Halloween. Tracing its roots to an ancient Celtic day of the dead known as Samhain, it was believed that souls and supernatural beings would wander the night. Various traditions have merged over time, ranging from praying for saints and “lost souls” to children dressing up in costumes and going from door to door searching for treats.

For resources for All Saints Day, go to www.seasonsonline.ca, click on the Library tab.



Dining with the True Self of the Other

Jana Norman tells about playing Zacchaeus

The scene was about as far removed in time, space, and circumstances from its originating impulse as anything could be – like the distance from the Earth to the Sun. It was a *Seasons of the Spirit* writers' conference, and we were focusing on the story of Zacchaeus. I was up on a platform built onto a tree in the back lot of a corporate chain hotel, somewhere in the outer loops of Chicago.

I was there as per prior arrangement, out ahead of the rest of the writers and editors up in this tree, perched as a catalyst to stimulate our thinking about the vertically challenged tax collector of Luke 19:1–10 who ran – against all social convention of the time – and climbed a tree to get a better view of Jesus (resulting in Jesus inviting himself over to Zacchaeus' house for dinner...resulting in Zacchaeus' restoration of his true self).

As I waited for my colleagues, taking in the bird's-eye view of the woody surroundings, listening for the group's arrival and craning my neck to get a first glimpse of them coming towards me on the path, the time and space and circumstances gap collapsed. This feeling of anticipation – a mishmash of wanting to change and be changed and sensing the approach of a threshold into the new but being afraid of the unknown, or worse, of nothing happening despite my running and climbing and waiting – was this what Zacchaeus experienced? Most of me knew I was only waiting to unpack an ancient story with my contemporaries. Still, a part of me was actually waiting to see Jesus, waiting

for a transformational encounter with this story, sent through time and across seas and cultures, to arrive in my hands like an unopened letter with a message for me.

When the group arrived, they asked me what it felt like to play the Zacchaeus part. I said, "I couldn't wait for you to see what I can see." I could see the possibility that someone could see the possibility in me. This is what I believe happened that day between the shorter-than-most tax collector and the larger than life teacher he dared to encounter. Zacchaeus saw that he was seen and that what was seen in him was blessed and worthy and beloved, his best, his true self underneath the calcified layers of greed and fear. And it changed not only his life but also the lives of those he would see as human beings from now on, no longer seeing the people from whom he collected the necessary taxes as means to his ends.

If I were sitting on that platform now, I would want to hear from my co-workers about the times they had been truly seen for who they know in their heart of hearts they are and can be. Times when the gracious wonder of another human being has been shown to them, and they were able to come into its house and have dinner with the true self of the other. Times when they felt all negative judgment melt away, leaving only the beloved possibility of you or me. That's the moment when the one in the tree and the one on the ground meet, and neither one is ever the same again.

Jana Norman is a Researcher at The University of Adelaide (South Australia), and, as an ordained minister, has ministered in and through the United Church of Christ (USA) and Uniting Church in Australia, including on the editorial and writing teams of Seasons of the Spirit™.

Consider the times when:

- **you have been truly seen for who you know in your heart of hearts you are and can be.**
- **the gracious wonder of another human being was shown to you, and you were able to come into their house and have dinner with the true self of the other.**
- **you felt all negative judgment melt away, leaving only the beloved possibility of you or the other.**
- **the moment when the "one in the tree" and the one on the ground meet, and neither one is ever the same again.**
- **Consider what actions you could take that could bring restoration.**



Lunch with Zacchaeus

Based on Luke 19:1–10 with reference to Luke 18:18–27

From the outside, it seemed that Zacchaeus had everything a person could want: a fine home, nice clothes, plenty of money to spend any way he chose. But, inside his big house Zacchaeus was lonely. He made his money by collecting taxes for the Romans. As far as his own people could see, he grew rich by making them poorer. So they hated him. Zacchaeus was unhappy. But he did not know how to change things.

When he learned that Jesus was on his way to Jericho, Zacchaeus decided to go and see him. Among the disciples, he had heard, was a former tax collector. Was this true? How had he come to follow Jesus? Why had Jesus welcomed him? Zacchaeus longed to know.

When the day came, the streets of Jericho were so full of people Zacchaeus could not even catch a glimpse of Jesus. No one would let him through. Why should they? But Zacchaeus would not give up. If no one would make way for him, he would make his own way. So he shinnied up a tree like a child and clung to a branch. From this high perch, Zacchaeus could see Jesus moving slowly along the road.

What would happen if he jumped down from the tree just as Jesus was passing by? Would Jesus help him up? Take his hand? Ask him who he was? Talk with him? In the middle of this daydream, Zacchaeus glanced down and saw Jesus looking up at him from the base of the tree.

“Zacchaeus,” called Jesus. “Come down from that tree. I need a place to stay and I believe you have room at your house.” Zacchaeus was so happy he dropped out of the tree like a ripe piece of fruit and landed in front of Jesus.

“My home is your home,” he said joyfully.

All around him he could hear the crowd whining and buzzing like angry mosquitoes. Why would Jesus choose Zacchaeus? A tax collector! They’re all a bunch of greedy traitors! Why not go home with a good person who deserves his company?

Jesus and Zacchaeus walked together through the clouds of stinging words.

When they reached his house, Zacchaeus fed Jesus with the finest food and wine money could buy. Jesus fed Zacchaeus with kindness and understanding.

After a wonderful meal and plenty of stories, Zacchaeus stood up and said, “Lord, I know what people say about me. But I am always generous to the poor. I give away half of what I own. And if I discover I have cheated someone, I always pay them back four times more!” He held out his open hands. “But I will joyfully give even more if you tell me to.”

Jesus hugged Zacchaeus. Then he said, “Along my way I have met many people who cling on to things – especially money. Entering the kingdom of God is a struggle for them. But your home and your heart are open – wide open. You give freely. You welcomed me with joy today and, because of that, salvation has come in too! Zacchaeus, you are a child of Abraham. Never let anyone tell you that you do not belong.”

Then they all enjoyed more food and music and dancing. Because when lost family members are welcomed home again, you really need to celebrate.

Read, Wonder, Listen: Stories from the Bible for Young Readers
by Laura Alary and Ann Sheng. Copyright © 2017 Laura Alary and Ann Sheng,
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A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



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.

Bible story

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Recording of today's story “Lunch with Zacchaeus,” or arrange for a storyteller to present the story.
- Paper or drawing pads



Suitable for all ages

The practice of storytelling

Directions

1. Listen to the story “Lunch with Zacchaeus.”
2. Imagine Jesus inviting himself over for a visit today – yes, Jesus is coming to your home today. Take a few minutes to jot down some written reflections to these questions. What do you imagine a visit from Jesus might be like? How would Jesus' visit make you feel? What would you eat? What would you talk about? What questions do you have for him? What questions might he have for you?

Younger children Imagine that Jesus is coming to visit you at your home. Draw a picture of Jesus' visit.

God's eyes

Materials

- Craft sticks
- Yarn of different colours
- White glue
- Hand sanitizer/wipes



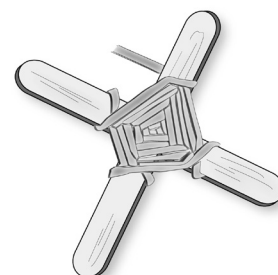
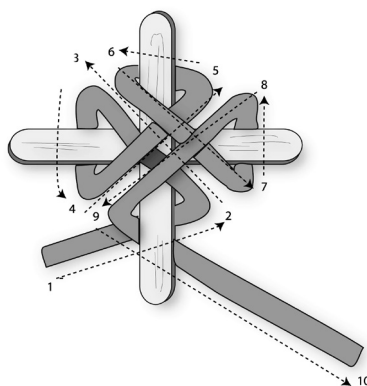
Suitable for all ages working together

The practice of seeing with the eyes of God

Directions

Jesus saw Zacchaeus through God's eyes. The Huichol indigenous peoples of Jalisco created weavings called *sikuli* (the power to see and understand things unknown) that have come to be known as “God's eyes.”

1. Glue two craft sticks together in a cross shape.
2. Following the illustration, wrap the yarn over and around one stick, then over and around the next, and so on.
3. You might use one colour of yarn or tie off the first colour with a tight knot and continue weaving with a new colour until you reach the ends of the stick.



A better view

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Large sheets of drawing paper



**Suitable for
all ages**

The practice of reflecting on life

Directions

1. Filling a sheet of drawing paper, draw a large tree and a crowd of people (simple stick people will work fine).
2. On the lower half of the paper, among the crowd or even in the trunk section of the tree, draw or make a list of the things that crowd your view of Jesus or get in the way of you seeing what Jesus is doing in your life and the world around you. Think about distractions, time commitments, personal feelings, or other examples that keep you at a distance from encountering Jesus' love.
3. On the top half of the page – perhaps in the branches and leaves of the tree – draw or make a list of things that might help you gain a better view or a different perspective of Jesus. Think about the things that help you feel closer to God and closer to your church community. What actions might you take to get a better view of Jesus and be close to his message of love and hospitality? How might you gain a different perspective of God's love?

Younger children Invite younger children to draw a picture of today's Bible story – maybe including themselves in the picture.

Retell in the story

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Writing paper
- Cards with names of characters from Luke 19:1–10: Jesus, Zacchaeus, someone in the crowd
- Bibles or copies of Luke 19:1–10
- Personal journals (optional)
- Craft sticks



**Suitable for all ages
working together**

The practice of entering the story

Directions

1. Choose a card with a character's name.
2. Read Luke 19:1–10 and reflect on the following questions from your character's point of view:
 - **What is your life like?**
 - **How do you feel about the other characters in the story?**
 - **What brought you to the streets of Jericho today? What does it sound like in the streets?**
3. Who in today's world do you think could identify with your character? Who might you say is the modern-day (insert your biblical character's name) given the context of this story?
4. You might write the story of Zacchaeus meeting Jesus as a monologue or first-person account from your character's point of view.

Younger children Think about what it might have been like to be in the crowd when Jesus was walking by you. Who is with you as you're waiting along the road? What does it sound like in the crowd? What do you think will happen when Jesus passes by you?

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' Friend, Zacchaeus

A story based on Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus was a rich tax collector who gathered money from the people of Jericho and gave it to the rulers. People didn't like Zacchaeus because of his job. No one ever wanted to go to his house.

One day, Jesus came to Jericho, where Zacchaeus lived. There was a big crowd, and Zacchaeus was so short that he couldn't see over all the people. He scrambled up a big tree and sat on a branch.

Jesus walked slowly along the road. Then he stopped under the tree. Jesus looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down. I'm coming to your house for dinner."

Zacchaeus couldn't believe what he was hearing. He scrambled down the tree. People started to grumble.

"How come Jesus chose Zacchaeus? He collects too much tax money. He always seems to get richer while we get poorer."

Zacchaeus heard the people and thought about what they said. Zacchaeus said, "Jesus, I want to do the right thing. If I cheat anyone, I give back much more money. I want to share all that I have with others."

Jesus replied, "You are a good friend, Zacchaeus. You are learning about living in God's way." Many people in the crowd watched how Jesus became Zacchaeus' friend.

Maybe it was time for them to be friends.

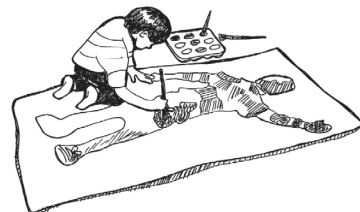
Welcome figure

You will need

- A length of mural paper
- Markers
- Crayons or water-based paint
- Paint brushes
- Alternative
 - smooth cement path (that guest will be using when visiting your home)
 - pavement chalk

Directions

- Lie on the length of mural paper or the smooth path and have someone trace the upper part of your body.
- Draw a cartoon bubble beside the face and print the welcoming words you would like to offer.
- Decorate the paper with markers, crayons or paint, or chalk if working on a pathway.
- Display your paper figure to welcome guests. Your chalk figure will be where guests can see when approaching your house.



A Basket of Gifts

Zacchaeus shares all that he has with others. These gifts are one way that Zacchaeus shows God and others that he loves them.

Draw things in the basket you might give to children who would benefit from receiving such a gift. Draw things like your books, toys, and clothes.

