

Planning



Sunday, February 26 – Saturday, March 4 • 2023

Into the Wilderness

Lent begins in an untamed garden and the wilderness where curiosity invites us to seek new insight into God's goodness in this time and place.

This week...

Ecumenical prayer calendar

Belgium, Luxembourg, The Netherlands

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. 26)

March 1 – St. David

March 3 – World Day of Prayer

Personal reflection

Some people love to start new adventures, and others approach them with a little more trepidation. No matter how we generally approach such things, there is always a certain degree of anxiety based on the things we do not know and the uncertainties that every new situation presents to us. Think about a time you have undertaken something new.

- **Did you find yourself spending time “in the wilderness” to prepare?**
- **When has the wilderness been a place of discovery for you?**

The planning page is provided in text format for copying, adapting, and adding to your bulletin, online worship resources, website, social media (see Weekly Resources – TEXT FILES folder).

February 28, 2023

Lent 1

Revised Common Lectionary (Year A)

Genesis 2:15–17, 3:1–7

Psalms 32

Romans 5:12–19

Matthew 4:1–11

the focus in age-level materials

Liturgical colour purple

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 [Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home](#) folder.





Genesis 2:15–17, 3:1–7

Psalms 32

Romans 5:12–19

Matthew 4:1–11

the focus in age-level materials

We venture forward with tentative steps into your wilderness. As we step forward, make our steps curious and bold. Grant us eyes to see new things, and hearts to feel new feelings. May this venturing forward reward us with adventure as we follow Christ. Amen.

Into the Wilderness

Lent is a time of journeying – with Jesus towards Jerusalem and deep within ourselves – to test and strengthen our faith. The wilderness may be a wild desert wasteland or a lush jungle; it may be the depths of the ocean or the ice of the Arctic or Antarctic. We are invited into Lent with a sense of adventure and curiosity as we respond by seeking new insights.

Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7 is set in the first wilderness inhabited by people. While it was lush and green, it was also a place of temptation. The self-awareness of Adam and Eve connects with the self-awareness Jesus expresses in Matthew. God has placed boundaries around Adam and Eve in the garden – a task (till the garden) and a prohibition (do not eat). The crafty serpent first questions then contradicts God, enticing Adam and Eve into dangerous knowledge. They tried to be like God but discovered their human limitations.

Psalms 32 explores our relationship with a loving God who is our hiding place. God preserves us, and surrounds us, and protects us. We see echoes of these actions in the gospel lesson for the day.

Matthew 4:1–11 Matthew places this story between Jesus' baptism by John and Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Forty days in the wilderness parallels Israel's forty years in the desert. Before land is entered or ministry proceeds, preparation in the presence of God opens the way. Three other figures play roles in this passage. The Spirit "leads" Jesus into the wilderness; he does not go alone. Often this text is seen as a time of testing for Jesus – perhaps it is also helpful to look at it through the lens of Jesus being with himself and with God. God, not the tempter, directs the course of action. Matthew variously identifies the second figure as tempter, devil, and

Satan. Within this story, the tempter puts a face on the presence of evil in the world by tempting "ends" that overlook the "means" used to achieve them. The tempter's offers to Jesus are for more power, possessions, and so on. This connects with the "more" Adam and Eve wanted in the garden. The third figure(s) are the angels at the story's end. Their "waiting on" Jesus translates a Greek verb (*diakoneo*) that also means "minister" or "serve at table."

In **Romans 5:12–19**, in their commentary in *Preaching the Letters without Dismissing the Law* (Westminster John Knox Press, p. 33), Clark M. Williamson and Ronald J. Allen offer a first-century Jewish perspective on this passage. "Jewish literature, however, does not interpret Adam's transgression in the sense of original sin, which is a distinctively Christian teaching. Rather, God forgave Adam: 'When he sinned, the Lord pronounced a sentence upon him, but when the Sabbath came, the Lord set him free... So the Lord made the attribute of mercy take precedence over the attribute of judgment'... What the law brings to sin Paul earlier characterized as 'recognition' or 'awareness.'"

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Wilderness is any place not affected by human involvement. In the wilderness, we often feel the temptation to long for more. We feel that we do not have enough food, time, possessions, wealth, power. When we follow the Spirit into the wilderness, we find that what may feel like a lonely venturing is accompanied by God. We can note that often we see the wilderness as a place of struggle, but the Spirit never leaves us; instead it travels with us into the unknown. We begin the adventure of Lent in the wilderness of a lush garden and the wilderness of the desert, seeking new insights from God.



Reflecting on the Word



Adapt and use for youth and adult studies,
sermon seeds, lay worship teams.

Connecting with life

Wilderness implies a place that is not tamed by human occupation. In the physical world, it might be a desert, mountain, forest, or ocean. Within our own lives, it may involve times of uncertainty, experiencing the unknown, or having to make choices with no clear outcomes.

Spend some time with the poster *Thread of Hope 3*.

- **Think about a wilderness time in your own life. Who or what helped you through the experience?**
- **What colours, shapes, or images remind you of the wilderness?**

Scripture

Matthew 4:1–11 Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to face different kinds of temptation – personal well-being, power and glory, “playing God.”

- **How does Jesus discover what matters in the wilderness?**
- **The temptations that Jesus faced are still powerful today. Where do you most notice them?**
- **What part do tests and trials play in spiritual growth?**

Materials poster: *Thread of Hope 3* Also available for projection in the Images to Project and Print folder.
Article “[Connecting with the Art for this Lent, Easter](#)” (p. 8)

A “wilderness” is a place that is not affected by human involvement. Urban spaces can also feel like the wilderness – perhaps desolate and empty.

- **Name some places that could be considered a wilderness (ideas include ocean, forest, mountain, field, inner city).**
- **Where do you see God in those places?**

Connecting scripture and life

“Know your why!” is a popular phrase asked of business people, those trying to improve themselves, or take on a challenge. The question can be powerful. In 2022, a group of 4 US military Veterans rowed across the Atlantic as part of a fundraiser for Veteran Suicide. “Foar From Home” (<https://foarfromhome.com>) was crystal clear about their “why” – to fundraise for organizations that help veterans with PTSD and to prevent veteran suicide. Knowing what matters most can serve as a guidepost and help us see clearly when we may feel lost.

- **Jesus’ wilderness experience confirmed what mattered for him – his “why.” When is a time when you needed to know your “why”? How did you discover it?**
- **Have you ever needed to state your “why”? What is it, and how does it keep you going?**

Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

Everyone knows what it is to start out on a new undertaking. Even young children are aware of some of the feelings associated with a first day at preschool or the anticipation of a vacation or other big event. For those who are older, we can readily recall the feelings we connect with starting any number of activities. What has that been like for you? What do you imagine that has been like for various people in your faith community? Are there major events

in the life of the community at large that represented new beginnings for people?

The notion of a new beginning may not seem alien at the start of the Lenten season, but the feeling of starting an adventure might be. How might we see Lent as an adventure to which God invites us? How might we keep open minds and hearts to gain new insight this year? How can we express the sense of adventure and keep it alive over the next five weeks?



Into the Wilderness

Prepare

NOTE: The following suggestions are mere starting points. You are invited to adapt, delete, 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 physically present, consider having a different individual say the bolded responses. Instructions are *italicized*.

- ❑ Recruit volunteers needed for worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Matthew 4:1–11. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “[A Day in the Wilderness](#)” on p. 28. Alternatively, for younger children, arrange for a storyteller to present “[In the Wilderness](#)” in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week’s materials. For the dramatic reading, arrange for three actors.
- ❑ Prepare the space with elements and objects from the wilderness most familiar to your community. (See “[Wilderness Scavenger Hunt](#)” on p. 27 for ideas for your wilderness collection.)
- ❑ You might gather some natural objects ready to be used for the psalm. Ideally, these objects would be easily picked up and played with to make some familiar sounds to the surrounding wilderness.
- ❑ Alternatively, for the psalm, you might opt for a recording of nature sounds. You might also choose to use these sounds to enter the worship experience.
- ❑ For prayers of the people, provide leaf shapes with the words “When I am in the wilderness I think of...” and writing implements. Place a large barren “tree” at the front of the worship space – this could be an outline on paper or a portion of a bare tree with several branches. The tree should be large enough to include one leaf for each person present.
- ❑ You might choose to print [Thread of Hope 3](#) on or in your bulletin (in the Images to Project and Images for Printing folders). See “[Connecting with the Art](#)” on p. 8 for background to the art and artist.
- ❑ Bring songs such as “Hold Us in Your Grace” and “Lo, I Am with You” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6 & 9; #11 and #27 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 6 & 9. Printed music and recordings are also available for purchase and download at https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order_products/).
- ❑ Set stations as described on pp. 29–30.



Music Suggestions

Hold Us in Your Grace

Keri Wehlander; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9

Be Still and Know

John Bell; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

Lo, I Am with You

The Iona Community; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

I Want Jesus to Go with Me

African-American Spiritual

Me Alone

Jamaican Traditional

The Summons

John Bell and Graham Maule

Together through the Valley

Linnea Good



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

Come into the wilderness.

Come away from the world and all that is so familiar,
and begin wandering through all that lives here.

We see there is life here.

It is not as barren as we had thought.

Come into the wilderness and discover that you are
not alone.

We are together in this sacred place.

**We come to find ourselves changed and restored in this
wilderness together.**

Opening prayer

God of love and mercy, we come together from different
places.

Some of us arrive content, others muddled and fractured,
and others somewhere between.

We aren’t sure what we will find wandering through this
wilderness.

We pray you will guide us,
making room for all we are,
and inviting us to be renewed.

Help us to embrace your joy and find hope arising anew.
Amen.



Worship Outline • February 26, 2023

Prayer of confession

O God, this isn't a place we want to be.

It is not a place we would choose because the wilderness is so unpredictable and unknown.

The uncertainty challenges us, and brings us closer to doubt.

We confess that this isn't a place that we expect to find you, but we are looking for companions and possibilities in this wilderness place.

We pray you will hold us in your grace, O God.

Option: Use the song "Hold Us in Your Grace" (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9) as a response to this confession.

Words of affirmation

Beloved, we are held here with all we are and all we are feeling.

God will instruct us and teach us the way to go.

Steadfast love surrounds us, now and always.

Engage

Opening the word

Psalm 32 Underscore the reading with wilderness sounds that might be familiar to your context or region. Sounds might include crashing waves, hooting owls, birds singing, rain falling, wind howling and may be recorded or created with rocks, twigs, rain sticks, bird calls, and other elements in the worship space. After listening to the psalm and the sounds of the wilderness, share these reflective questions:

- **What does the wilderness feel like: a hiding place, a refuge, or perhaps a place where your whole body groans? What feels like wilderness?**
- **How do you know when God's steadfast love surrounds you?**

Matthew 4:1–11 the focus scripture for age-level materials in *ENCORE*

Choose from the following.

Bible story Arrange for a storyteller to present "[A Day in the Wilderness](#)" on p. 28. Alternatively, for younger children, tell the story "[In the Wilderness](#)" (in *Exploring Our Faith* at the end of this week's materials).

Dramatic reading Have three people take up a still pose, allowing time for the people to reflect. Person 1: dressed in everyday clothes,

Person 2 dressed in sand-coloured clothes, Person 3 dressed in blue/ purple clothes.

Matthew 4:1–2

Person 2 leads or beckons Person 1 towards the front of the worship space.

Matthew 4:3–4

Person 3 faces Person 1 with a welcoming smile, with outstretched hands as if offering a gift.

Matthew 4:5–7

Change position or direction or stand on raised area or box.

Person 3 points downwards with one arm as if looking into the distance and the other arm protectively around the shoulders of Person 1.

Matthew 4:8–10

Change position or direction again.

Person 3 proudly indicates a wide area with arms outstretched at shoulder level and eyes focused on a distant wall.

Matthew 4:11

Person 1 takes centre stage with head and shoulders drooping. Person 2 places their arms around Person 1's shoulders in a comforting way.

Option: Use the song "Me Alone" (traditional Jamaican) as a simple call/response song to frame the reading from the gospel. Sing it once or twice before the gospel text and then once or twice again after.

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 "Lo, I Am with You" as people gather again (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6, #27 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 6. Printed music and recording are also available for

purchase and download at https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order_products/).



Affirmation of faith

We affirm our faith together.

**We believe in God who has created and is creating;
who made the fertile ground and the desert;
who offers us choices and provides the bread of life.**

**We believe in Jesus, who came to share our humanness
and walked the journey of life ahead of us;
who was tested to the limits and tried to the edge of
endurance;
who accepted the comfort and support of others in life's
extremity and always showed God's love.**

**We believe in the Spirit of God whose breath brings life
to the dust of the earth,
who leads us on through the seasons of life and stays with
us on the pathways of death.**

**This is the God we proclaim and worship and seek to serve
in our lives.**

Prayers of the people

Distribute leaves (or another appropriate symbol of the wilderness in your region) with the words "When I am in the wilderness I think of..." written on them. Alternatively, have them available as bulletin inserts. Invite everyone to take a few moments to think of how they might finish that sentence. Offer these questions and invite the congregation to write responses on their leaves:

- **Are you in the wilderness now, wanting to be rescued?**
- **Do you believe the community, nation, or humanity is**

in the wilderness and needs transformation?

- **Are there people who are sick, hurting, or grieving?**

When ready, invite the people to come forward and tape their leaves to the tree – bringing the "wilderness" to life with our prayers. When all have done this, a worship leader might offer the following prayer:

As Jesus went to the wilderness to be alone with you, Loving Creator, when we find ourselves in wilderness, in desert, in lonely and seemingly destitute places, lead us to turn to you.

May we find you in all the places of our lives:

in places of joy and hope, and in places of despair and heartache;

in times of wonder and imagining, and in times of anxiety and fear.

Help us know that, wherever we are, and whatever is going on in our lives, you hear us and you respond to us – and above all that, you love and care for us. Amen.

People could be invited to each take a leaf home after worship and pray for the concerns listed on it during their weekly prayers.

Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

Take these gifts we offer, loving God, and use them for your work.

Take our very selves – our hopes, our dreams, our plans, our wonderings –

and use them, too, to make your world a better place. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Bless

The wilderness can be a lonely place where we go alone, but the Spirit leads Christ there.
It is the Spirit that sends us out into this world to love and serve.

Go with the faith that you are held in grace and surrounded by love. Amen.

Special Days Commentary

March 1 – St. David

David was a sixth-century bishop known for an ascetic, spiritual life. David was also highly regarded for a ministry to people struggling in poverty and compassionate work with those who were sick. Since the 12th century, David has been considered the patron saint of Wales.

March 3 – World Day of Prayer

An ecumenical movement initiated and carried out by women in more than 180 countries, World Day of Prayer promotes the spirit of church unity. The international prayer services, planned by women in a different country each year, usually focus on mutual understanding between people and the promotion of world peace. The yearly service of prayer is translated into more than 100 languages.



Wilderness Scavenger Hunt

This Lent, we step into the wilderness together. Wilderness places often feel barren and empty. They are places that are untamed and uninhabited. The wilderness can at times be full of organic, natural elements and can be constructed with concrete slabs and rebar. Wilderness times can be transformative and renewing as we pray this Season of Lent will be.

Too often, the wilderness feels far away from where we live and move and have our being, but Lent will begin this year by looking for the wild places in our everyday life. Use this scavenger hunt to gather symbols and reminders of your immediate wilderness and bring them to the designated collection spot in your congregation. With your help, these materials will be used to decorate the worship space, and as resources in the faith stations.

To prepare for your collection of wilderness objects, you might begin with these questions for reflection:

- **What do the wildest places in your area look like? Does your wild feel like a lush forest, a sandy beach, or a concrete jungle?**
- **Where do you go outside to find renewal in your community?**
- **What hints of living organisms and beings do you find in these places?**

In your exploration of your local wilderness, here are some items that you might find evoke the sense of possibility we hope to find in the wilderness this Lent.

Sticks or twigs



Leaves



Rocks



Barren or flowering branches



Discarded water bottles



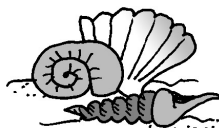
Acorns, pine cones or seeds



Chunks of broken sidewalk



Shells



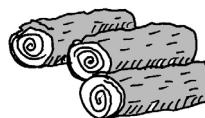
Dirt



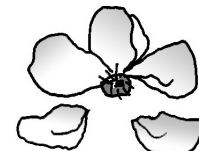
Wildflowers



Logs



Petals



Moss



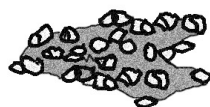
Reeds and tall grasses



Driftwood



Gravel



Sand



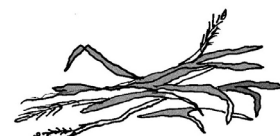
Mulch



Plastic bags found blowing in the wind



Dry grass



A Day in the Wilderness

Based on Matthew 4:1–11

Jesus and the disciples were sitting around the campfire one night.

"You know," one of them said to Jesus, "you never really told us how you started your ministry."

"Yeah," said another one. "You said you were off in the wilderness for a while. What was that like?"

"Let me tell you," Jesus replied.

"I went to the wilderness to think. You know how sometimes it's good to get away from others, to have some time alone with God? Well, that's what I did.

"While I was there, I went without food for a while to focus all my thinking on God. After a while, I got pretty hungry! And I heard a voice telling me I could turn some stones into bread."

"Did you do it?" one of the disciples asked. "After all, you can do some pretty amazing things."

Jesus smiled. "Yes, I can do some amazing things. But I thought: turning some stones into bread would only last for a fleeting moment. What I needed was what I had gone out to the wilderness to get, and that was the presence of God. That was much more important than bread.

"Then, I heard the voice a second time. 'If you really trust God, jump off this cliff. God will save you.' But I thought, no, it's silly to put God to that kind of a test.

"And then I heard the voice one last time. 'Leave God behind,' it said. 'Leave God behind and just look out for yourself; you'll do better.'"

Jesus paused for a moment. "And you know, that was just what I needed to hear. Because I had gone to the wilderness to be with God, and at that moment, I knew that I needed God. I needed to put God first in my life, or I just wouldn't get anywhere. So that's when I left the wilderness – and went to have something to eat!"

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 "[A Day in the Wilderness](#)"
- Alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

The practice of storytelling

Directions

1. Listen to the story "A Day in the Wilderness."
2. When do you find comfort in being in the wilderness or a quiet space?
3. Write or draw a favourite place that is like the wilderness for you.



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.

Welcome walk

Materials

- Space to move and explore



The practice of exploration

Directions

Lent is full of new colours and textures. It offers new rhythms to how we structure our lives which may include new practices of prayers or shifting our eating habits.

1. Begin by breathing deeply.
2. Move your feet to explore your surroundings. Use your senses to notice what you see, hear, touch, smell, and even taste.
3. Conclude with another deep breath and give thanks for all that you have explored. As your walk ends, whisper, bow, or exclaim, “Welcome, Lent!”

Settling into the wilderness



The practice of being

Directions

Settling into a new place takes time. It takes time to learn your new surroundings and find comfort in being among so much that feels new. Practice simply being in this new place.

1. Begin by breathing deeply and welcoming the wilderness of this new season.
2. Allow all your thoughts and feelings about Lent and the wilderness to surface, and then let them go.
3. Invite your curiosity to wonder: What might I find here in this wilderness?
4. Listen without judgment.
5. Breathe deeply and give thanks.



Sand art

Materials

- Sand tray/box
- Plastic sheet or mat
- Trowels
- Small rakes
- A small jug of water
- Driftwood
- Shells
- Stones



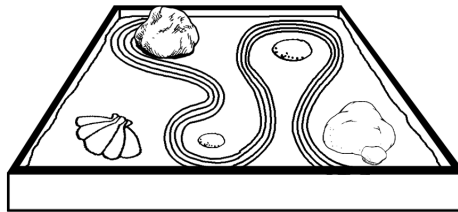
Suitable for
all ages

The practice of connecting

Directions

Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness, where he thought about making wise choices in life. Sand art and sand/ Zen dry landscape gardens can be fun to create and are both meditative and healing.

1. Use the sand tray and objects to create sand art or a sand/Zen garden as you think about Jesus finding his way in and through this wilderness experience.



Wilderness angels

Materials

- Clothespin/dolly pegs
- Fabric square
- Leaves
- Sticks or twigs
- String or yarn
- Basic supplies



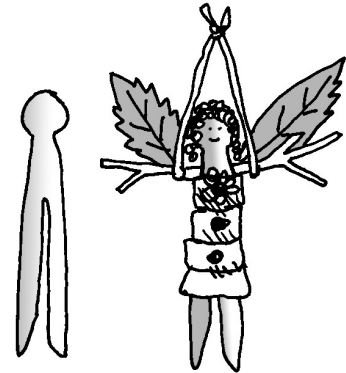
Suitable for
all ages

The practice of creativity

Directions

There were angels with Jesus as he left the wilderness, and there are angels with you now as you welcome the wilderness. Wilderness can feel like a far-off place that is hard to reach, just as angels feel hard to find. Create your own wilderness angel to keep you company through this season and as a reminder that God is always with you.

1. Begin by wrapping your clothespin with fabric to make a garment. Secure with glue.
2. Glue a stick or twig to the back of your angel to make arms.
3. Loop a string and knot around either arm to create a hanger.
4. Adhere wings from leaves on top of the sticks/twigs.
5. Add hair and other decorative elements to make this angel a true companion for this Lent's wilderness exploration.



Counting rocks

Materials

- Rocks of varying shapes and sizes



Suitable for
all ages

The practice of play

Directions

In the Talmud, the rabbis suggest that the number 40 is important because forty days after a child is conceived, it is believed that the soul enters the body. Forty, therefore, is a symbol of birth, rebirth, and change. For us, forty is a big number. It can feel really old or just in the middle of life.

1. Begin with just one rock.
2. Stack rocks one on top of the other.
3. Count as you add each rock. Wonder as you build:
 - How many rocks can you stack before it topples?
 - Is there a magic number where it feels like anything is possible?

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.

In the Wilderness

A story based on Matthew 4:1-11

It was early in the morning. Up in the trees, birds were singing.

Outside the house, a dog barked.

In the carpenter's shop, a man hammered some nails into wood.

Outside, women were getting water from the well.

Jesus liked to hear all these sounds, but one morning he needed a quiet place to think. So Jesus walked down the path, past the birds in the trees, the dog, the carpenter, and the women at the well. Jesus kept walking until he got to a very quiet place.

No birds were singing.

No one was hammering.

No one was talking.

There were no people and the only sound Jesus heard was the quiet whispering of the wind. Oo-ooo-ooo.

Jesus stayed out in that quiet place for a long time.

Jesus thought a lot about what God wanted him to do. Jesus knew that God was with him. Jesus knew what God wanted him to do. And Jesus knew he could say "no" when he needed to. Soon Jesus was ready to go back to the noisy, busy village.

Jesus knew that God was with him in the village, just as God had been with him in the quiet place.

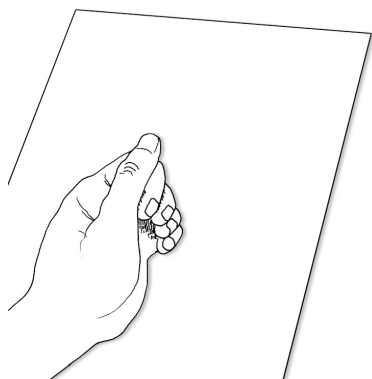
And God is with us, too!

Wilderness Path

As we travel with Jesus in the wilderness, we discover that God guides us and helps us be strong. Make your own wilderness path to remember that God guides you too.

For this craft, you need:

- Light-coloured construction paper
- Tempera or fingerpaints
- Dry, clean sand
- Glue



Directions

1. Make a fist and dip the pinky finger side of your hand into the paint.
2. Press on paper to make a footprint.
3. Add five toes to your footprint by dipping one finger in paint.
4. Make a footprint design across the page.
5. Ask for help to print the words "God guides me as I follow Jesus" at the bottom.
6. Once dry, spread glue around footprints and sprinkle sand over glued areas.
7. Shake off excess sand to reveal your wilderness foot-path.



Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness thinking about what God wanted him to do. What else might have been in the wilderness? Think about what you might have seen on the ground, in the distance, or in the sky. Add them to the picture.

