



## Advent and Christmas 2023

# Kid's Time segments

*Consider providing the children with a small handout for each week of Advent. E.g., Week 1 – sparkly star stickers, week 2 – heart shaped chocolate, week 3 – white feather.*

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## Week 1

# Living with hope

**Main idea:** Hope in Jesus helps us through tough times.

### Activity

*Hold up a closed box and ask:*

Who would like to put their hand into this box of cockroaches and spiders?  
Would you put your hand into it if I told you there is a little prize at the bottom?  
What if I told you there is \$1000 at the bottom?

There are NO spiders or cockroaches in my box – and there is not \$1000 either. But you might take on a challenge if you had hope that there was something good at the end.

### Teaching

In life, we might (you can customise these examples for your group):

- Join a new sporting team, even though we feel nervous and must get up at 6am for training – because we hope that we will get fit, have fun and meet new friends
- Practice a musical instrument for hours, even though it is boring sometimes – because we hope to be able to perform well at a big concert
- Keep spending time with a friend, even though we fight sometimes – because we hope that we can work it out and take good care of each other

Hope in something good helps us to get through the challenges.

I want you to close your eyes for a minute and imagine that you are in a long, very dark tunnel. Then, far away at the end of the tunnel, you see a light. What do you think you might do?  
Allow for responses.

I would start making my way towards that light. The light might help me to see clearly where I am, and it might help me to find a way out.

Many years ago, some wise men saw a bright light and they followed it. It was a new star in the sky. Matthew 2:2 (NLT) says, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." When they followed the light of the star, it brought them to Jesus. The bright light of the star gave them hope because they knew it would lead them to someone who would save them.

Jesus is sometimes called 'the Light of the World'. He gives us hope to keep moving forward in life, even when things are tough, or we are afraid. Jesus gives us hope because he made a way for us to live with God forever. Sounds good, doesn't it?

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, when times are tough, please remind us to have hope in you. Amen.

## Optional Extras

### Memory verse

*Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me.*

*All day long I put my hope in you.*

*Psalms 25:5, NLT*

## Craft

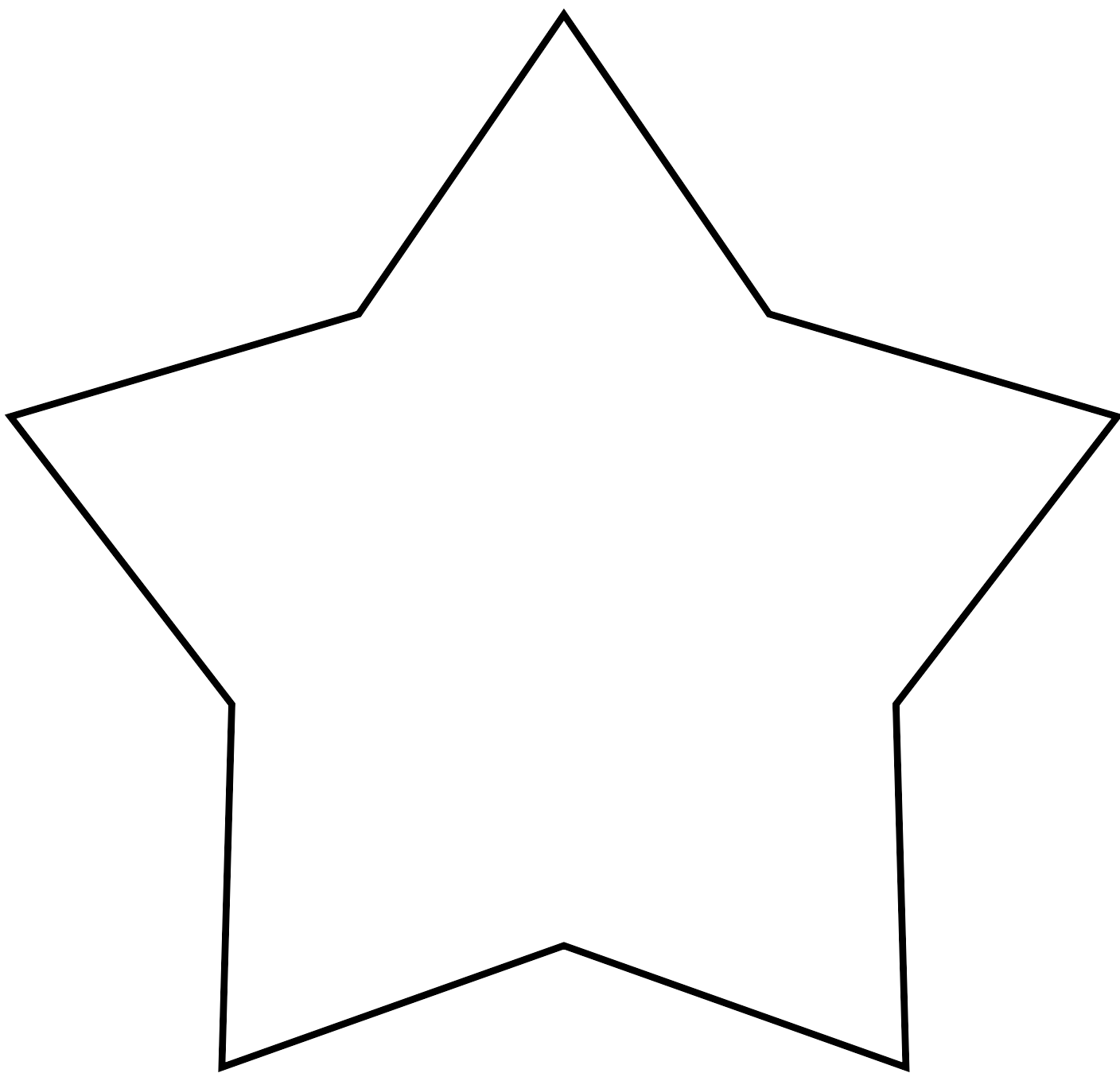
### You will need:

- > Enough cardboard star templates for each child
- > Hole punch
- > Ribbon
- > Crayons, paint or oil pastels

### Steps:

1. Punch a hole in the top of the star
2. Use the materials provided to colour the star
3. Thread a piece of ribbon through the hole to form a loop







## Week 2

# Living with love

**Main idea:** Love comes from God because God is love.

### Activity

*We are going to have a quiz! Who likes quizzes?*

*You can ask everyone to call out the answers or, ask people to raise their hands and choose one person to answer, or choose two volunteers and have a competition between these two. Note, there are many answers that could be true for each of these answers – don't be too concerned about accuracy.*

1. Where does honey come from?  
*A beehive or bees (or a jar, supermarket, the pantry etc.)*
2. Where does milk come from? *A cow (or the fridge, a supermarket, nuts etc.)*
3. Where does fruit come from? *A tree (or the fruit bowl, an orchard etc.)*
4. Let's try something a bit harder ... Where does water come from?  
*Rain, streams, the tap, water tank etc.*
5. Where does love come from? *God*

### Teaching

Love comes from God.

1 John 4:8 (NLT) tells us that, "anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

God is love.

From the beginning to the end, God is love.

In the beginning, God created the world, including people, with creative love.

In the middle, God gave us the gift of a baby, Jesus, with generous love.

In the end, God gives us life with him, with forever love.

Love comes from God because God is love.

### Prayer

Dear Jesus, thanks for coming into the world as a baby to help us understand that God is love. Amen.

## Optional Extras

### Memory verse

*Anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.  
1 John 4:8, NLT*

## Craft

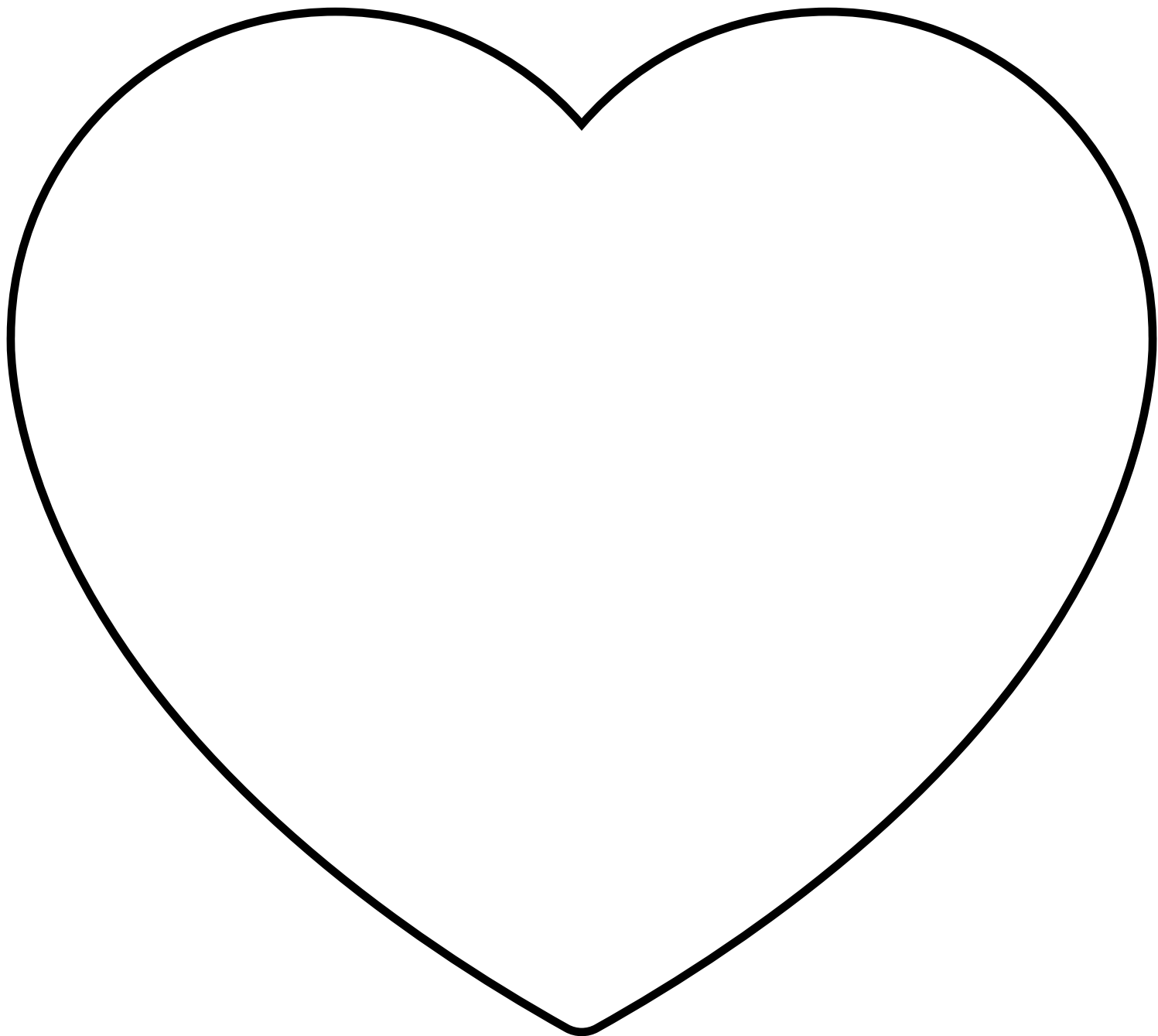
### You will need:

- > Enough cardboard heart templates for each child
- > Hole punch
- > Ribbon
- > Glue
- > Small strips of tissue or crepe paper in a variety of colours

### Steps:

1. Punch a hole in the top of the heart
2. Scrunch a strip of tissue or crepe paper to form a small ball
3. Stick it to the heart
4. Repeat to cover the template
5. Thread a piece of ribbon through the hole to form a loop









## Week 3

# Living with peace

**Main idea:** Peace helps us to not be troubled or afraid.

### Teaching

*Arrange for someone to come running in carrying balloons, flowers etc., excitedly shouting about the arrival of a new baby.*

Can you remember the arrival of a baby in your family?

Maybe you have had a baby brother or sister, a cousin or perhaps your friend has had a new baby in their home. What did you do to celebrate? Allow for responses.

The birth of a baby is an exciting time. Often there are a lot of visitors. There might be presents. Sometimes there will be balloons. We might even have a party.

The birth of Jesus was an exciting time. Shepherds came to visit, important people brought him special gifts, and some angels had a bit of a party. There were lights and sparkles out in a field, way past dark. They were shouting and singing that Jesus had been born. Luke 2:14 (CEV) tells us that they said, "Praise God in Heaven! Peace on Earth to everyone who pleases God." This baby was going to bring peace.

Later, when Jesus was a man, he said to his friends, "I am leaving you with a gift — peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid" (John 14:27, NLT).

Jesus doesn't promise his friends that their lives will be easy, but he does give them peace in the middle of troubles.

### Activity

*Hold up a pair of noise cancelling headphones.*

- > I wonder if you know what these are?
- > Warn everyone that there is about to be a lot of noise and let them know it's okay for them to step out for a moment if they will find the noise upsetting.
- > Choose a volunteer to wear the headphones.
- > Ask everyone else to make a lot of noise. Arrange for someone to bang on a drum and/or beat a spoon on a saucepan. Stamp feet, clap hands, shout etc.
- > While the noise continues, ask the volunteer to remove the headphones for a moment then put them on again.
- > Ask the volunteer about the experience. What was it like wearing the headphones? What difference did it make? What was it like when you took them off again?

There are lots of ways that we try to find peace – wearing noise cancelling headphones in a noisy space, going for walks in nature, trying to end wars. But the peace we find is only ever for a short time. Jesus is the Prince of Peace — the peace he gives cannot be taken away and it is forever. The peace Jesus gives us helps us to live through the difficult times without feeling anxious or afraid — resting and trusting in God. When we are filled with this kind of peace, we can also share it and live peacefully with others.

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, please share your peace with us and help us to live peacefully with others. Amen.

## Optional Extras

### Memory verse

*“I am leaving you with a gift — peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”*

*John 14:27, NLT*

## Craft

### You will need:

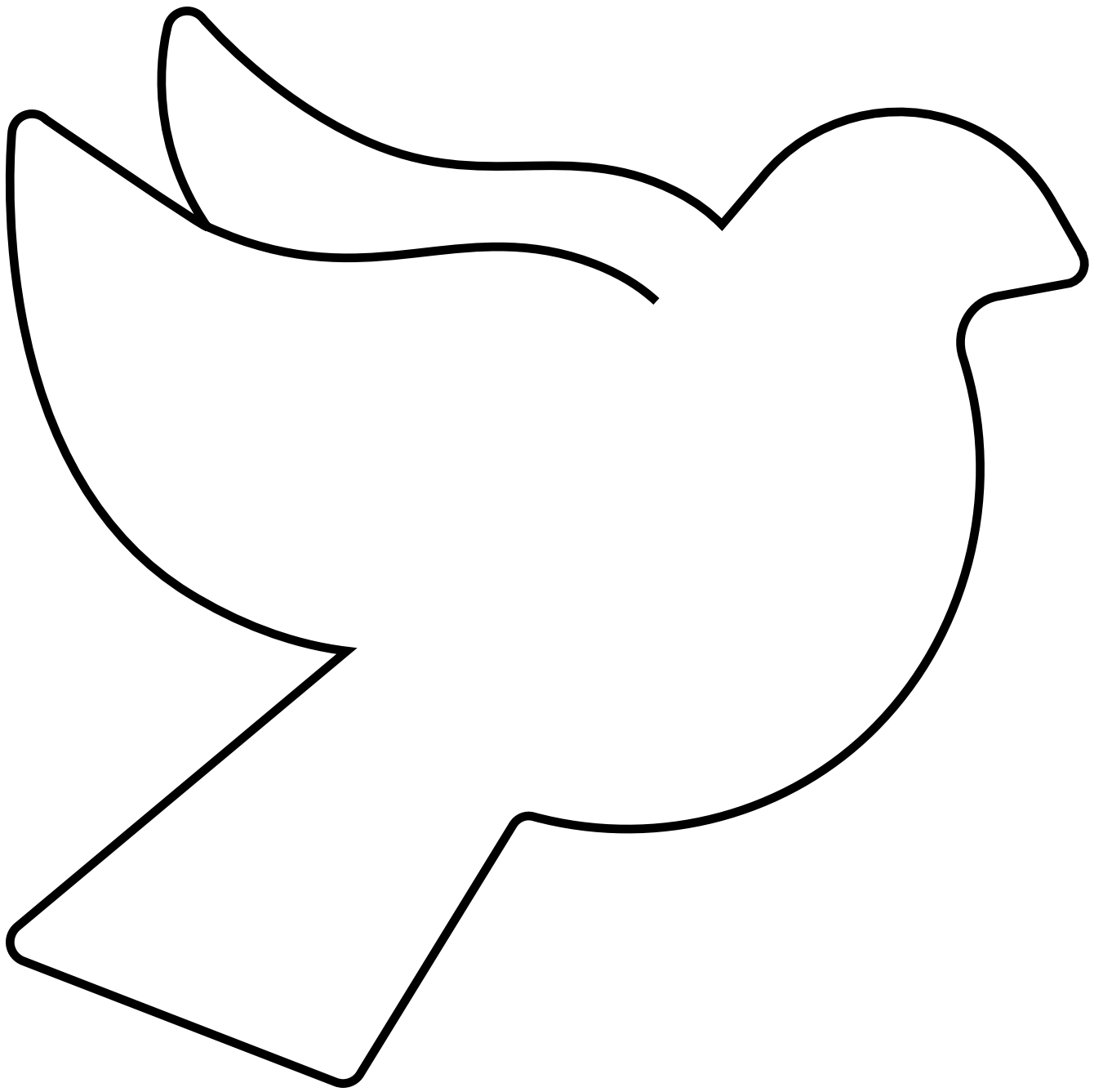
- > Enough cardboard dove templates for each child
- > Hole punch
- > Ribbon
- > Glue
- > Craft feathers
- > Glitter (optional)

### Steps:

1. Punch a hole in the top of the dove
2. Cover the template with glue
3. Layer the feathers onto the template, adding more glue as needed
4. Optional – sprinkle the dove with a little glitter
5. Thread a piece of ribbon through the hole to form a loop







## Week 4

# Living with joy

**Main idea:** Joy comes from knowing Jesus.

### Activity

*I wonder what makes you happy? Happy/sad scenarios.*

Read the following statements and ask everyone to respond by standing up/raising their hand if it makes them feel happy or sitting down/lowering their hand if it doesn't make them happy.

- > Going to school
- > Spending time with friends
- > Eating cake
- > Cleaning the toilet
- > Having screen time
- > Reading a book
- > Playing soccer
- > Making a volcano
- > Spending time at the beach
- > Eating Brussels sprouts

### Teaching

Sometimes we feel happy when we get a new toy, or when we spend time with a good friend or when we eat something delicious. All these things might happen at Christmas time!

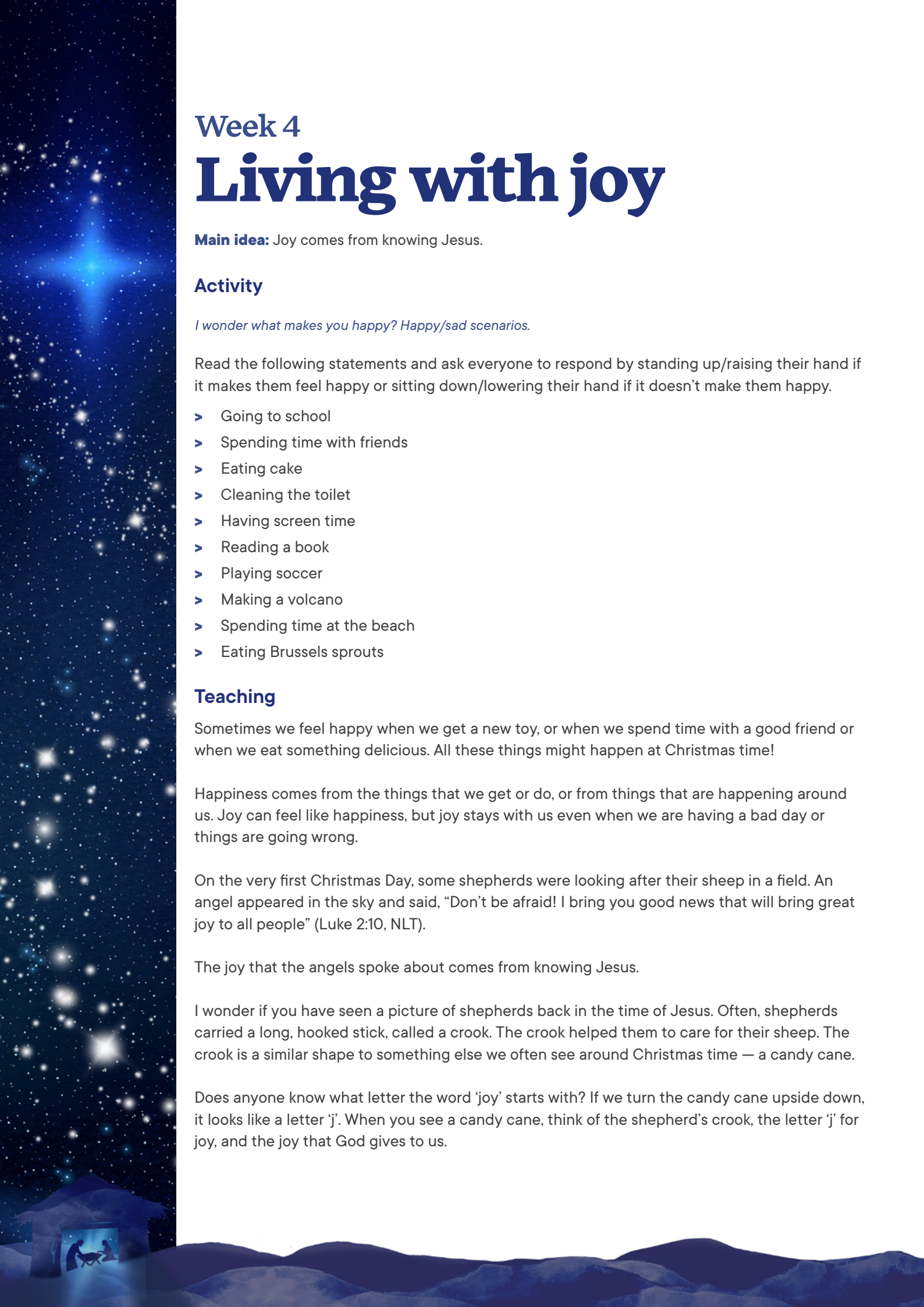
Happiness comes from the things that we get or do, or from things that are happening around us. Joy can feel like happiness, but joy stays with us even when we are having a bad day or things are going wrong.

On the very first Christmas Day, some shepherds were looking after their sheep in a field. An angel appeared in the sky and said, "Don't be afraid! I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people" (Luke 2:10, NLT).

The joy that the angels spoke about comes from knowing Jesus.

I wonder if you have seen a picture of shepherds back in the time of Jesus. Often, shepherds carried a long, hooked stick, called a crook. The crook helped them to care for their sheep. The crook is a similar shape to something else we often see around Christmas time — a candy cane.

Does anyone know what letter the word 'joy' starts with? If we turn the candy cane upside down, it looks like a letter 'j'. When you see a candy cane, think of the shepherd's crook, the letter 'j' for joy, and the joy that God gives to us.



## Prayer

Dear Jesus, thanks for all the things that make us happy! We especially thank you for the joy that comes from knowing Jesus. Amen.

## Optional Extras

### Memory verse

*The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy.*

*Psalm 28:7, NLT*

## Craft

### You will need:

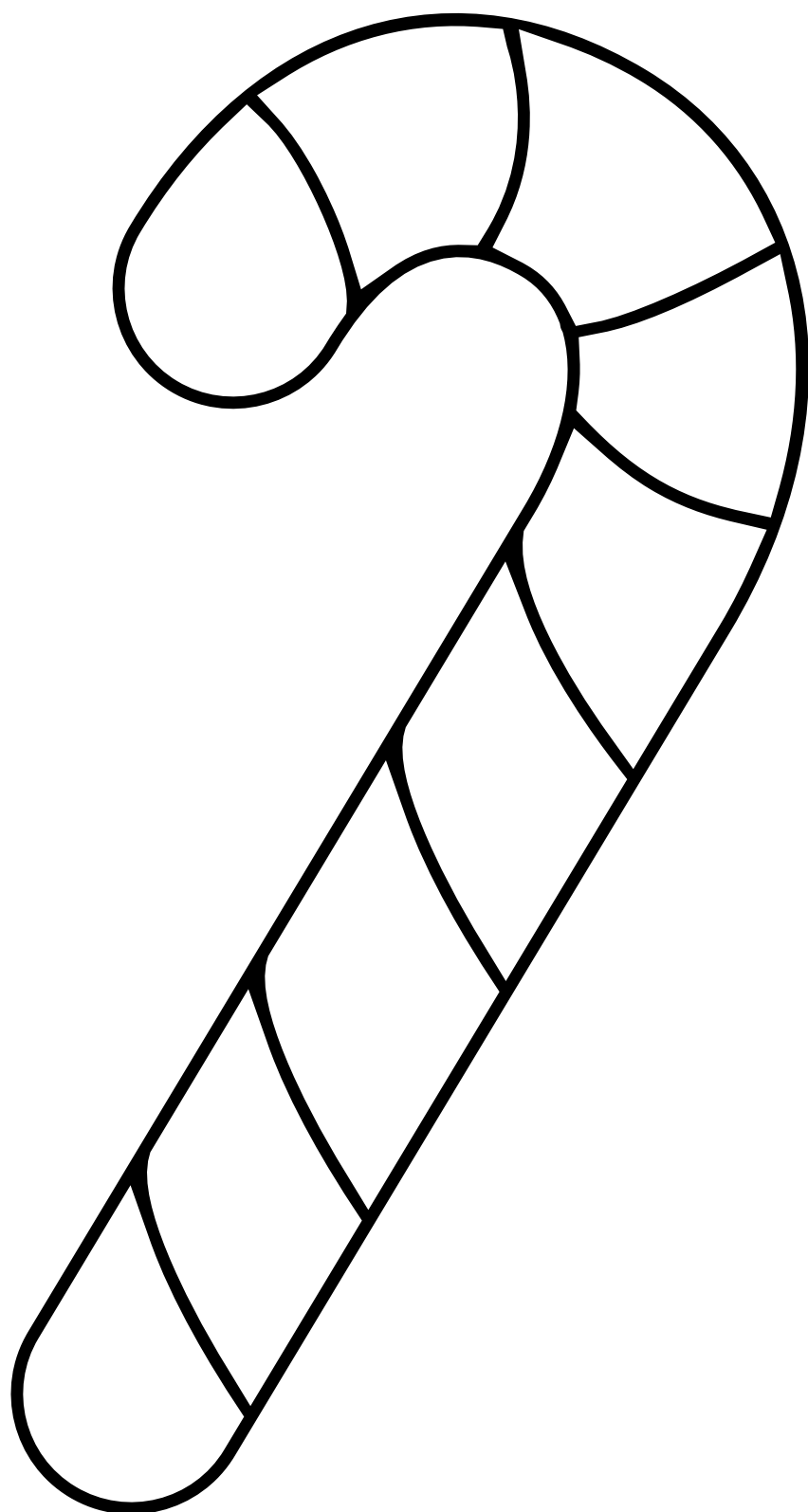
- > Enough cardboard candy cane templates for each child
- > Hole punch
- > Ribbon
- > Glue or double-sided tape
- > Shallow tray filled with red glitter

### Steps:

1. Punch a hole into the top of the template
2. Apply strips of glue or double-sided tape to form a stripey pattern
3. Press the sticky side of the candy cane into the glitter
4. Gently shake excess glitter back into the tray
5. Thread a piece of ribbon through the hole and tie to form a loop









# Christmas Day

## Living with the Good News

**Main idea:** The Good News is that God loves everyone.

### Activity

Over the past four weeks we have chatted about four characteristics. I wonder if you can remember them. First, we talked about (hold up a star) hope. Then we talked about (hold up a heart) love. Then (hold up a dove) peace. And, last week, (hold up a candy cane) joy.

You might already know that today is a special day. What day is it? Right, Christmas Day.

On Christmas Day, people often have good news. Would anyone like to share some good news?

Allow for sharing (after each one, say, “That’s good news”).

Did anyone get a special present today? That’s good news.

Is anyone looking forward to eating something special today? That’s good news.

Is anyone on holidays right now? That’s good news.

Is anyone planning to spend time with family or friends this week? That’s good news.

You might remember that yesterday, we talked about the very first Christmas Day. Some shepherds were looking after their sheep in a field. An angel lit up the sky and said, “Don’t be afraid! I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people” (Luke 2:10, NLT).

What good news did the angel have to share?

A baby, Jesus, had arrived to help everyone understand God’s love for us. Just like the angels, we can share this good news with others.

### Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the good news of your love. Help us to share this good news with others. Amen.

## Optional Extras

### Memory verse

*"Don't be afraid! I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people."  
Luke 2:10, NLT*

## Craft

### You will need:

- > Enough cardboard angel-shaped templates for each child
- > Hole punch
- > Scissors
- > Glue
- > Scraps of fabric, wool, tinsel, buttons etc. to decorate
- > Ribbon

### Steps:

1. Punch a hole in the top of the angel
2. Use materials provided to decorate angel, taking care not to cover the hole
3. Thread a piece of ribbon through the hole and tie to form a loop





