

Some ideas for setting up

# Prayer Stations



Compiled by Jane Tibbs, Children's Adviser for the Diocese of Bath and Wells

### Firestarters Flame collage

Materials: large flame shape on the floor made of paper or card, paper, glue sticks, scissors, pens and crayons

'Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there.' Acts 2:3

The flame symbolises the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the movement of the Holy Spirit now. The aim of Firestarters is to pray that flame into the lives of children.

- Think about the good things about life – friends, family, countryside, flowers, etc
- Draw some of the good things you have thought of and cut them out
- Stick them on to the flame on the floor
- Make a small flame and stick it to the large one
- Spend some time quietly thanking God for the good things about your life

### Candle Prayers

Materials: large lit candle, candle prayer cards, pencils, 'words' sheets

Words and phrases on individual sheets: sadness, darkness, abuse, sorrow, pain, suffering, light, love, care, hope, family, forgiveness, relief, happiness, healing, recovery, safety.


'Jesus said ' I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness.'" John 8:12

The light of Christ came into the world to shine in all dark places and sad situations. As we remember children we think of Jesus the light, and ask his light to shine in the pain that some children face.

- Look at the flame of the large candle shining and bringing light
- Look at the words on the wall
- Write a prayer on the candle card for you to take and say at home using some of the words on the wall.



Jesus said,  
"I am the Light of the World.  
Whoever follows me will have  
the light of life and will never  
walk in darkness."  
John 8:12



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Hope

Power

Abuse

Forgiveness

Pain

Safety

Sorrow

Family

Suffering

Darkness

Relief

Sadness

Light

Healing

Care

Love

Happiness



## Love for the World

Materials: large inflatable earth or globe

'O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world' Psalm 8:1

The world was made by God, and it is beautiful. At one time it was perfect, but things have gone wrong and the world is not the great place it once was. This was not how God meant it to be. Sometimes children are particularly damaged and hurt by things that happen in the world.

- Look at the world and try to find places you have been to, places you have heard about, and places you would like to visit
- Imagine the pain God feels when he sees his perfect world going wrong
- Think about children in other parts of the world
- Hold or hug the world silently for a short while, thinking of all of the children in the world, and particularly those who are suffering.

These readings may be placed for people to read

O Lord, our Lord,

Your greatness is seen in all the world!

Your praise reaches up to the heavens.

Psalm 8:1

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Sometimes children are particularly damaged and hurt by things that happen in the world.

... and the whole family was filled with joy, because they now believed in God.

Acts 16:34

## The Way Forward

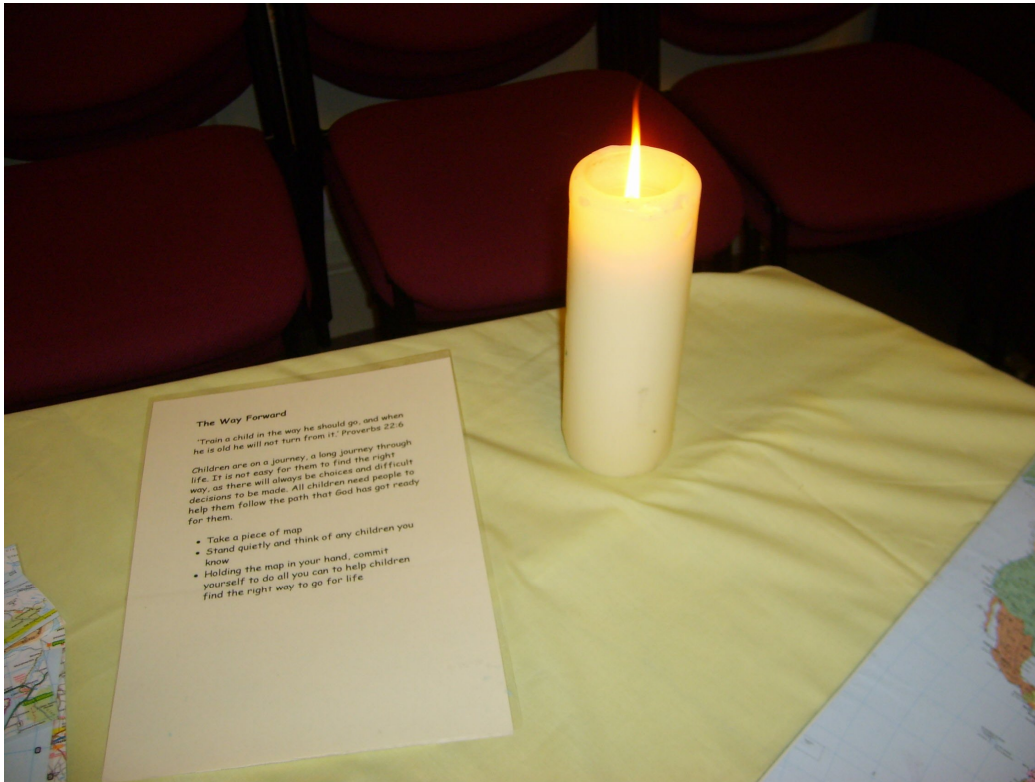
Materials: small pieces of a map (any map will do)

'Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.'

Proverbs 22:6

Children are on a journey, a long journey through life. It is not easy for them to find the right way, as there will always be choices and difficult decisions to be made. All children need people to help them follow the path that God has got ready for them.

- Take a piece of map
- Stand quietly and think of any children you know
- Holding the map in your hand, commit yourself to do all you can to help children find the right way to go for life



### Prints for Children

Materials: thin dark paint, wet wipes, towels, floor covering, sheets with a child outline shape

'We know that we are children of God' 1 John 5:19

Our finger-prints are special to us, and no-one anywhere has a finger-print like yours! As we put our fingerprint onto the shape of a child we recognise that we, and all people including children, are precious to God.

- Dip a finger into some paint
- Mark a child outline with your finger-print
- As you do so say out-loud 'We know that we are children of God'

### Field of Children

Materials: Small cardboard figures, pens, tray of damp sand or heavy soil, prayer on a large sheet: 'God, please use ..... Help him/her work for you'.

'...we are all God's fellow workers.' 1 Corinthians 3:9

God calls us all to work for him and to bring the joy of knowing him to others. We can all do something for God, however young or old we may be. As we place children into the tray, we can imagine adding soldiers to God's army.

- Take a child shape
- Write the name of a child on it
- Place them into the soil or sand, adding them to God's army of workers
- Quietly pray 'God, please use ..... Help him/her work for you'.

### Growing Hands

Materials: paper of mixed colours, pens, glue, scissors, green paper backdrop with flower and plant stalks and leaves drawn on

'God created us to grow in beauty'

Children are loved by God. He wants them to grow in beauty, and to be happy and complete. Each of us can help all children to grow and blossom.

- Take a piece of paper and draw around your hand
- Cut out the hand shape
- Stick the hand shape on to the backdrop as a flower
- Sit quietly looking at the 'flowers', think of a child you know and care about, and say 'God created ..... to grow in beauty'. If you are a child use your own name.

### Hand prayers

Materials: pieces of paper, pencils, scissors

On a piece of paper, draw around and cut out the shape of your own hand. On the four fingers write:

- something to praise God for
- something to thank God for
- something for which you would like to ask God's help
- something you would like to say sorry about

Fold down the fingers on the paper hand when you have said the prayer





### Bubble Prayers

Materials: bubble-blowing tubs, profiles (below) printed out on large sheets.

'I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father'.

Jesus promises to hear our prayers and act on them. As we name Jesus and ask him to be with the children on the profile sheets, or other children known to us, we can be sure that Jesus hears our prayer.

Profile 1: Katie and Emma are from a happy home. Just a few weeks ago their father decided to leave home and live with someone else. Katie and Emma and their mum are all shocked and confused.

Profile 2: Saddam was badly injured in the last war in Iraq, and will never see again. His mother and many other relatives were killed in the fighting.

Profile 3: James has difficulties learning, and his mother sometimes finds it very hard to make James understand. At school he gets teased because he gets special help.

- Read the three Profiles and try to imagine what life is like for those children
- Think of a child you know who is going through a difficult time
- Blow a bubble, and say 'Jesus, be with .....(name)'
- Watch the bubble as, just like our prayers, it rises and vanishes

### Prayer paper chain

Materials: ready made paper chain strips or strips of coloured paper, glue or stapler

Write a short prayer on a paper chain strip.

Make the strip into a link of the paper chain and add it to the chain

### Out of the mouths

Materials: tape player, tape of short comments about their life made by children, marker pens, flipchart paper

We need to learn to listen to children

Many children have lives full of fun and variety. Some also suffer, go through difficult family times, and are damaged.

- Listen to the tape of children's comments for a few minutes
- Think about the main words or themes you hear
- Write those and any other words from the comments on the paper
- Sit and pray silently for the children whose voices you have heard



## Quiet Light

Materials: small candles, matches, prayer sheets on display

Prayer (on large sheets): 'Father God, who created light in our world, bring peace and light to our schools now. Amen'

'Out of the darkness light shall shine' 2 Corinthians 4:6a

Schools should be a place of light and enjoyment. However, many children feel pressure or suffer bullying while at school. Teacher and other staff face increasingly difficult workloads and targets. God brings peace to places of unrest and light to darkness.

- Think of schools you know, and silently ask God to shine his light into the children and staff
- Light a candle and say the prayer
- Watch as your candle flickers and adds to the light



## Water of Life

Materials: A large bowl, two smaller bowls of water, small cups, the two prayers below printed onto large sheets

'I will pour water onto the thirsty land' Isaiah 44:3

In the Bible the love and power of God is often described as water. Water can be really refreshing when we are thirsty, and it help things grow. God wants all children to be refreshed by him, and to grow well.

Prayer 1: Spirit of God, as we pour this water please fill all the children in our home / church / community. Amen

Prayer 2: Father God, refresh all children and give them new life and a new love for you. Amen

- Read the two prayers and decide which one you prefer
- Take a small cup and fill it from one of the smaller bowls
- Slowly pour the water into the large bowl, saying the prayer as you do so



## The Pebble Pool

Materials: small stones or pebbles, large bowl of water

Choose a pebble and hold it in your hand as you pray – either for yourself, for someone else, or in memory of someone dear to you.

Say this prayer as you drop the pebble in the water:

Loving father, I bring to you (the person/situation) who this pebble represents. In your mercy, receive my prayer, which I ask in the name of your dear Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Each pebble placed in the pool represents a prayer.

Say this prayer as you look at the pebbles in the pool:

Loving Father, in whose hands I place myself day by day, I bring to you all those whom these pebbles represent, their needs or their remembrance, committing all things to your love. I know that we are all important to you, and so I pray also for your grace and blessing on those who used these pebbles in love and concern for others. I ask this in the name of your dear Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, Blessed trinity, be honour and glory now and forever. Amen.

## Pebble Prayers

Materials: small stones or pebbles

Begin by choosing a stone

Take time to sit quietly with the stone in your hand. Let the warmth of your hands slowly warm the stone.

As you sit, know that God is present.

Know his love for you; let his love warm your heart.

Let his love melt the hard, cold places in your life .....

Have these passages available for people to read:

I will give you a new heart and a new mind.

I will take away your stubborn heart of stone and give you an obedient heart.

Ezekiel 36:26

Be still, and know that I am God,

Supreme among the nations,

Supreme over the world.

Psalms 46:10

## Pebble People

Materials: small stones or pebbles, a small mat or piece of carpet

'...and the whole family was filled with joy.' Acts 16:34

God's ideal is that children enjoy being part of a loving and caring family. Families come in all shapes and sizes, and sometimes families are not happy or safe places.

- Think of a child and family known to you
- Pick up a stone and place it on the mat, saying 'This is a child'
- Pick up another stone and say 'This is the child's mother (or carer)'
- Pick up another stone and say 'This is the child's father'
- Pick up two more and say 'This is the child's family'
- Pick up two more and say 'These are the child's friends'
- Look at your pile of stones, and quietly think of all the people involved in a family



### Focus Flags

Materials: simple flags made with bamboo sticks and thin cloth, with the following on them, one of each: three or four figures and the word 'family', plenty of children and the word 'school', a group of children with footballs and the word 'clubs', and a church building with people and the word 'church'.

'Whoever welcomes children in my name welcomes me.' Mark 9:37

Jesus says good things about those people who spend time with children. Most families really love the children in them, and children are also welcome in many clubs, schools and churches.

- Pick up the 'family' flag, wave it gently, and think about all children you know who are a part of families. Ask God to help both the children, and the parents in that family.
- Pick up the 'school' flag, wave it gently, and think about all the children who go to school. Pray for both the children and all the staff as they care for their pupils.
- Repeat in a similar way with the other two flags. 'clubs' and 'church'

### Children in view

Materials: newspaper collage of stories which include children, other newspaper and magazine articles, cuttings and pictures, scissors, glue

'I will teach your children and bring them success' Isaiah 54:13

Children can be successful, but others suffer. Children are often in the news, but it is not always good news. God values children, yet the world so often hurts them and lets them down.

- Read the headlines and look at the pictures on the collage
- Think about the stories and pray for those involved
- Cut out a headline, picture or story about children
- Stick it to the collage

### Darkness and Peace

Materials: a basic installation based on Psalm 23, similar to an 'Easter Garden', the complete text of Psalm 23 (modern version) printed out on large sheets.

God knows that we are all likely to face difficult times, and that includes children. But God also promises to give us rest and refreshment, and help us through the dark, difficult times.

- Look at the model and read the words of Psalm 23
- Quietly think about where God is leading the church
- Think about what times of peace and refreshment children have
- Consider what the 'dark valleys' are for children
- Pray the last verse of the Psalm, replacing 'me', 'my' and 'I' with the name of a child who is special to you



Blessed are...

Materials: post-it notes, pens, the quotes from the Beatitudes displayed on large sheets

Beatitudes Quotes: Happy are those who want to do what God says  
Happy are those who are not proud or boastful  
Happy are those who are kind to others  
Happy are those who are pure and live a good life  
Happy are those who work for peace

One day Jesus spoke to his followers about how they should live. He said that people could find real happiness deep down if they lived the right way. It is important that children and young people learn to live in the way Jesus described. Some of the things Jesus said are on display here.

- Read the things Jesus said can make people happy inside
- Think about which you would like to be like
- Write your name on a post-it note and stick it near these sayings of Jesus

Putting the Pieces Together

Materials: 4 A4 size pictures of a child or children in a range of bad situations of war, sadness or poverty. These can often be found in newspapers and magazines. Each one should be laminated and then cut up into four or five pieces.

'He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.' Psalm 147:3

The world is not always a good place. Children are often the victims of war, poverty and suffering. They may go through more pain and hurt than most adults ever experience.

- Take a pile of pieces and put them together
- Think about God's promise to heal and rebuild even the most damaged of people
- Silently ask God to bring healing and relief to all children who are suffering

Changing Cultures

Materials: examples of books, toys and games used by children two generations ago and used today (NOTE: If any items are valuable this activity will need supervision), a flipchart or large piece of paper, pens

'I the Lord do not change'. Malachi 3:6

The world that children are growing up in is changing all the time. Many things which they read or play with were not known even a few years ago. Some of the things which are popular with children may not be safe or suitable.

- Look at the range of items
- Consider things which children now do which may not be good
- Write a simple prayer on the flipchart asking God to protect children from the bad things in today's culture



## Planting a Seed

Materials: sunflower seeds, plastic cups, potting soil, spoons, floor covering

'Other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew, and produced a good crop.' Mark 4:8

In order to grow to be strong and healthy seeds need good soil, feeding and watering. In the same way children need comfort and love in order to develop into the people God made them to be. As we plant seeds we pray that children will have all they need to grow well.

- Take one of the seeds in your hand
- Look at it and think of children you are close to
- Put some soil in a cup and place your seed deep inside it
- Hold the cup with the seed in it and ask God to help you and any children you know to grow into the people he wants us all to be



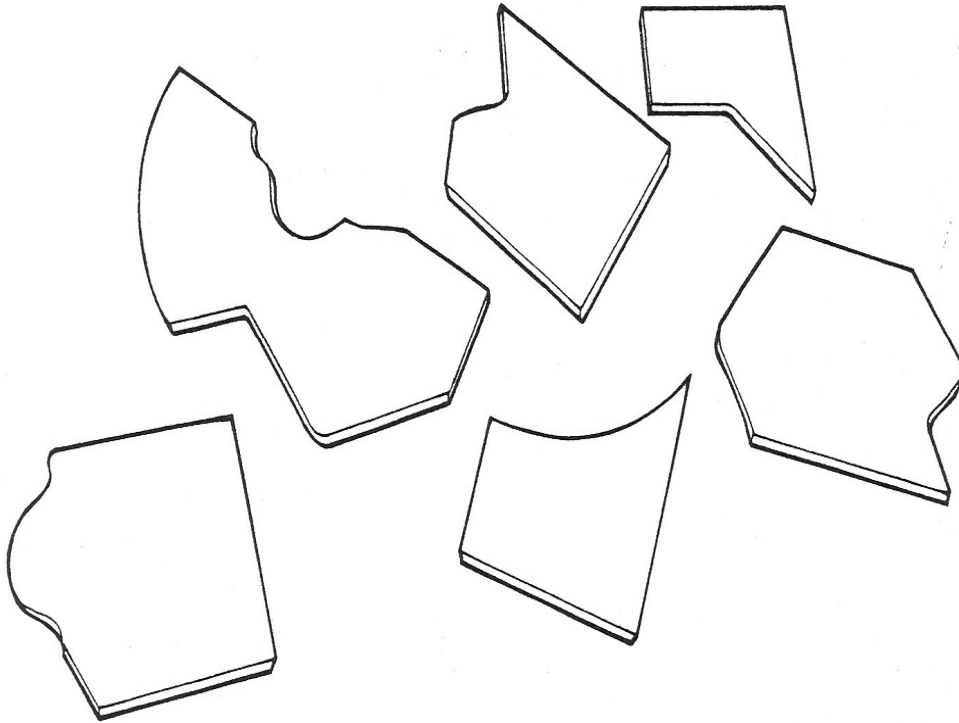
## Cross puzzle

Materials: a cross made of thin card or wood cut into six pieces to make a jigsaw

Explore ....

... the themes of Lent and Easter ...

... with the pieces of this cross



When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ my God:  
All the vain things which charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small,  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts 1674 - 1748



## St Bridget's Cross

Materials: strips of coloured paper or thin card about 1cm wide

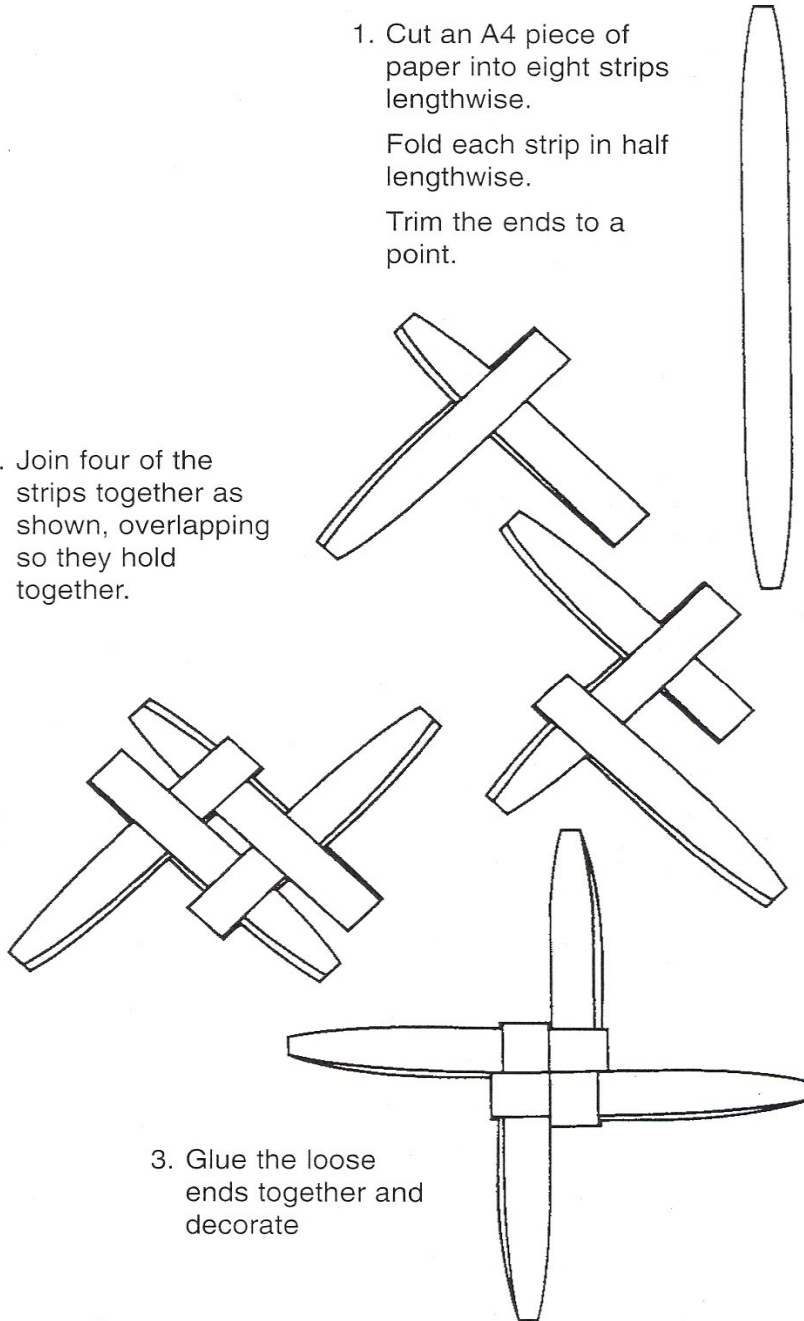
- Take 4 strips of card
- Fold each strip in half
- Join the strips together as shown, overlapping so that they hold together

1. Cut an A4 piece of paper into eight strips lengthwise.

Fold each strip in half lengthwise.

Trim the ends to a point.

2. Join four of the strips together as shown, overlapping so they hold together.



3. Glue the loose ends together and decorate

## St Bridget

Bridget was born in the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century in Ireland, the daughter of a nobleman and a Christian slave. She was a spirited young woman who, from an early age, cared little for personal property. Throughout her life she was known for being someone who gave away as much as she could to those in need.

She began a Christian abbey at Kildare and her nuns ranged from princesses to slaves.

Bridget's generous hospitality to the poor and sick was renowned and there are many miracles attributed to her saintliness. She became, like Patrick before her, a patron of poets, craftsmen and healers and the church at Kildare became, in the years after her death, well-known for its splendour and beauty.

As a saint she is associated chiefly with art and learning, as well as the work of a dairy-maid, which had been her job as a slave girl.

According to legend, Bridget used to weave crosses which were then tied with ribbons, which she gave as gifts to whoever she met on her journeys.

It is believed that St Bridget's cross acts as a protection to ward off evil and danger and small crosses can be found in many Irish homes.

Bridget's feast is 1<sup>st</sup> February.



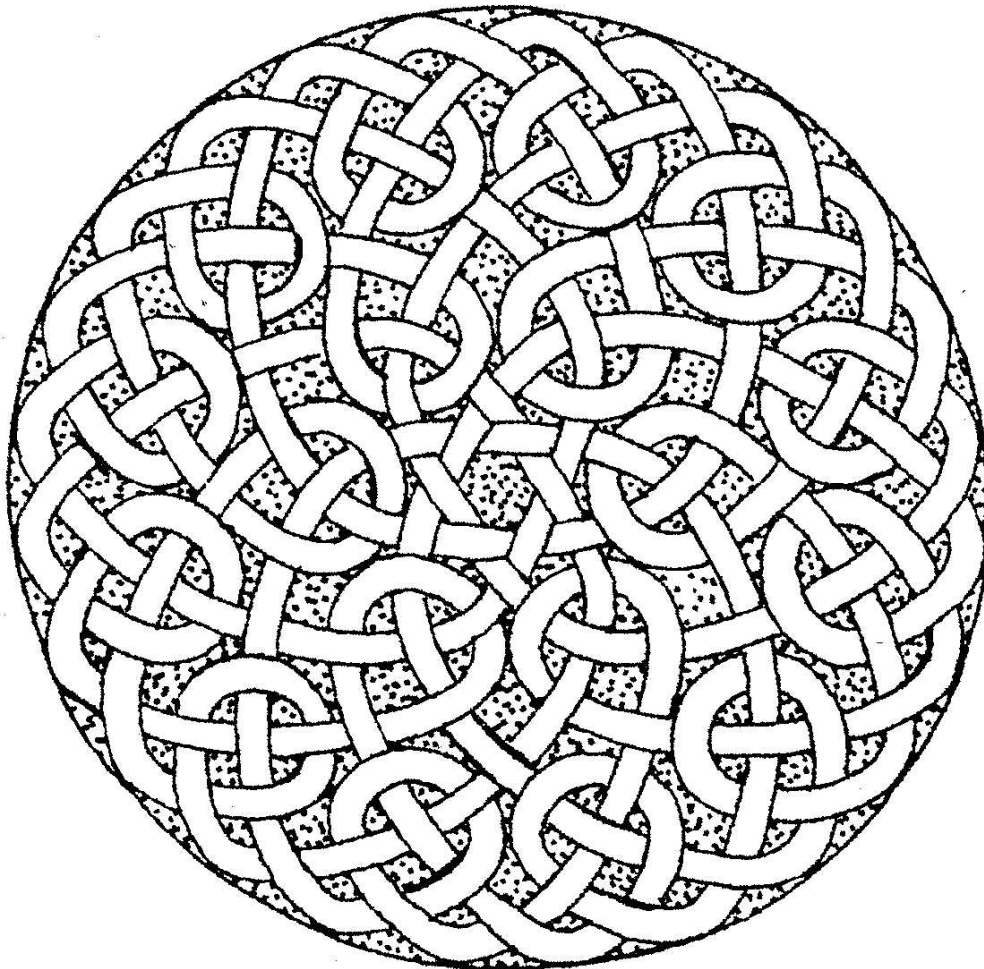


I bind unto myself this day

Use this outline as a meditation ....

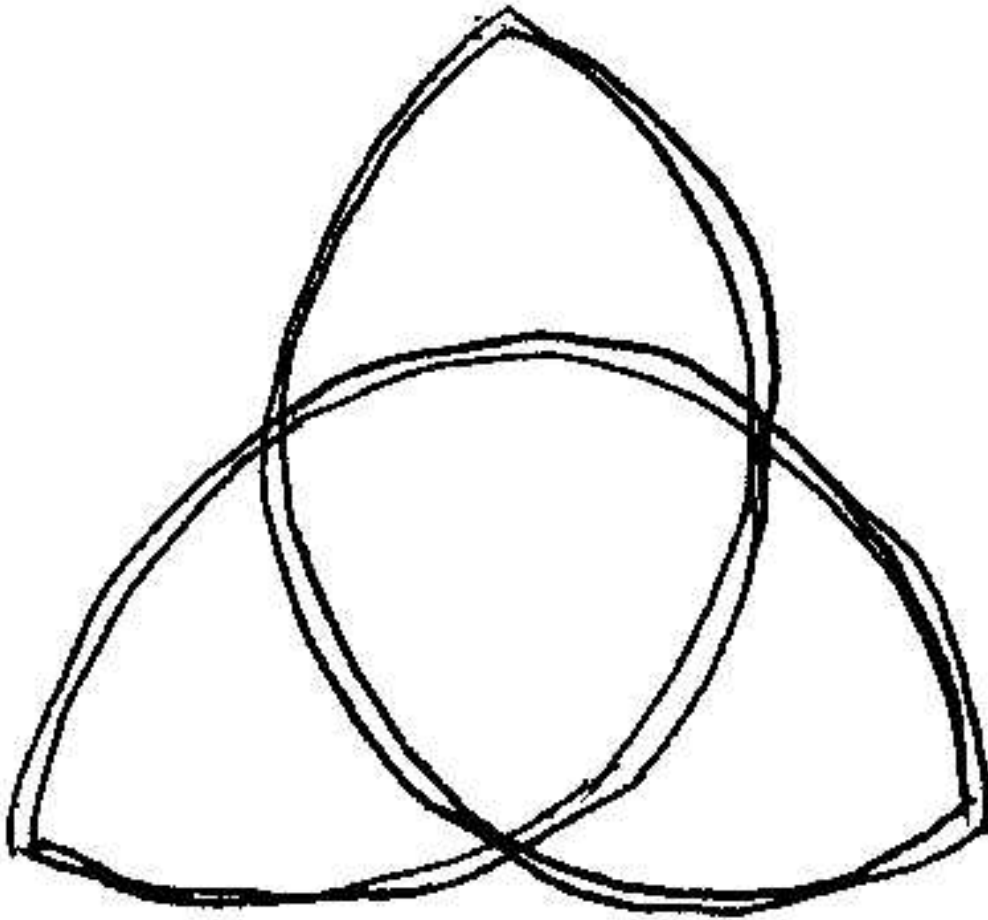
You may want to trace the bindings with a pencil or your finger ...

You may want to add colour ...





I bind unto myself today ..... the Three in One, the One in Three



Use this sheet and move over the shape with a soft pencil, crayon, pastel ...

Get into a rhythm ...

Use it as a meditation for the binding of the Three in One and the One in Three ...

Start from different points ...

Notice the shifts in movement ... the insights ... the differences and similarities ...  
the physical and inner feelings or moods ...

Vary the pace ...

I wonder how you might see each of the enclosed spaces ...

Take a penny in your hand...

Materials: a pile of pennies

Take a penny in your hand.

Look at the head side of the coin and pray for all the world leaders.

With closed eyes try to work out by touch which side is which.

Pray for those who are blind or have poor sight – and for those who are prejudiced.

Look at the tails side. Use the portcullis to prompt prayer for those in prison.

Hold the coin in the palm of your hand. Pray for those who are very poor.

Roll the penny between your thumb and fingers, feeling its roundness. Thank God for the huge planet we live on, and ask him to help us look after it.



## Thank you for being our special friend

"I speak to you as my friends, and I have told you everything that my Father has told me" John 15:15



You will need cardboard gingerbread people shapes, the outline of a train, brown envelopes, backing paper and glue

Cut out the outline of a large train and mount it on backing paper with several carriages made out of brown envelopes coupled on behind. Then give the children simple cut-out figures on which to draw a face, hair and clothes to make the figure look like them. Explain that Jesus wants to be our special friend. We can't see him, but we can talk to him in our prayers and we know that he hears us and is always there for us.

Take time to discuss what each child would like to write in the centre of their figure, for example, Thank you, Jesus, for being my special friend or Thank you that you love me and care about me.

Put the figures into the empty train carriages and write underneath,;  
"We're all friends of Jesus!"

This prayer collage could be used on a weekly basis. Why not take all the figures out at the end of the session and pray for each child as you replace them? For example, "Lord Jesus, thank you that you are Sarah's special friend. Please be with her this coming week."