

# FIRST SUNDAY after CHRISTMAS

*Directions: Read the scripture selected from the Revised Common Lectionary, perhaps before bed, in the morning, or during a family meal. Move through the discussion questions in one sitting or answer one a day to help reflect on the scripture throughout the week. End your time in prayer. This could be a simple ritual to incorporate into the week.*

## PSALM 148

Praise God!

Praise God from the heavens;

praise God in the heights!

Praise God, all God's angels;

praise God, all God's host!

Praise God, sun and moon;

praise God, all you shining stars!

Praise God, you highest heavens,

and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of God,

for God commanded and they were created.

God established them forever and ever;

God fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise God from the earth,

you sea monsters and all deeps,

fire and hail, snow and frost,

stormy wind fulfilling God's command!

Mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle,

creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples,

princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike,

old and young together!

Let them praise the name of God,

for God's name alone is exalted;

God's glory is above earth and heaven.

God has raised up a horn for God's people,

praise for all God's faithful,

for the people of Israel who are close to God.

Praise God!

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you like to give praise to God?
2. Looking back on this year, what has reminded you of God?
3. As a new year approaches, what things in your life can you praise God for?
4. How can you remember and celebrate people/things that are close to you?
5. How can you remember and celebrate people/things that are far away from you?

## STAR LIGHT

**Materials:** Flashlight, tape, paper, scissors, pen/pencil or safety pin/sewing needle

Looking to the stars can help us remember how vast the world is and how God connects everything together. What about when we can't see the stars? Can we create a reminder of them?

Here is a craft to have stars whenever you like—a reminder of God's creation. Follow the steps below:

- Trace the outline of the flashlight head onto the paper.
- Cut out the paper a little bigger than the flashlight tracing.
- Use the pen/pencil/safety pin/sewing needle to poke small holes into the paper cut-out.
- Tape your paper cut-out to the front of the flashlight so it covers the light.

Turn off the lights in the room and turn on your flashlight.

Slowly move your flashlight around the room, taking time to observe the star-like light shining through the holes.

As you look at the light, take a moment to meditate on the scripture, pray for God's creation, or just breathe.

## PRAYER

God of creation, thank you for being present no matter where we are! Help us celebrate you and the amazing beings in your world. Near or far, let us remember we are connected through your great love.

**Amen.**

PRAISE  
GOD

SUN AND MOON

Praise  
GOD,  
all you

Shining Stars!

PRAISE GOD  
in the  
highest heavens.