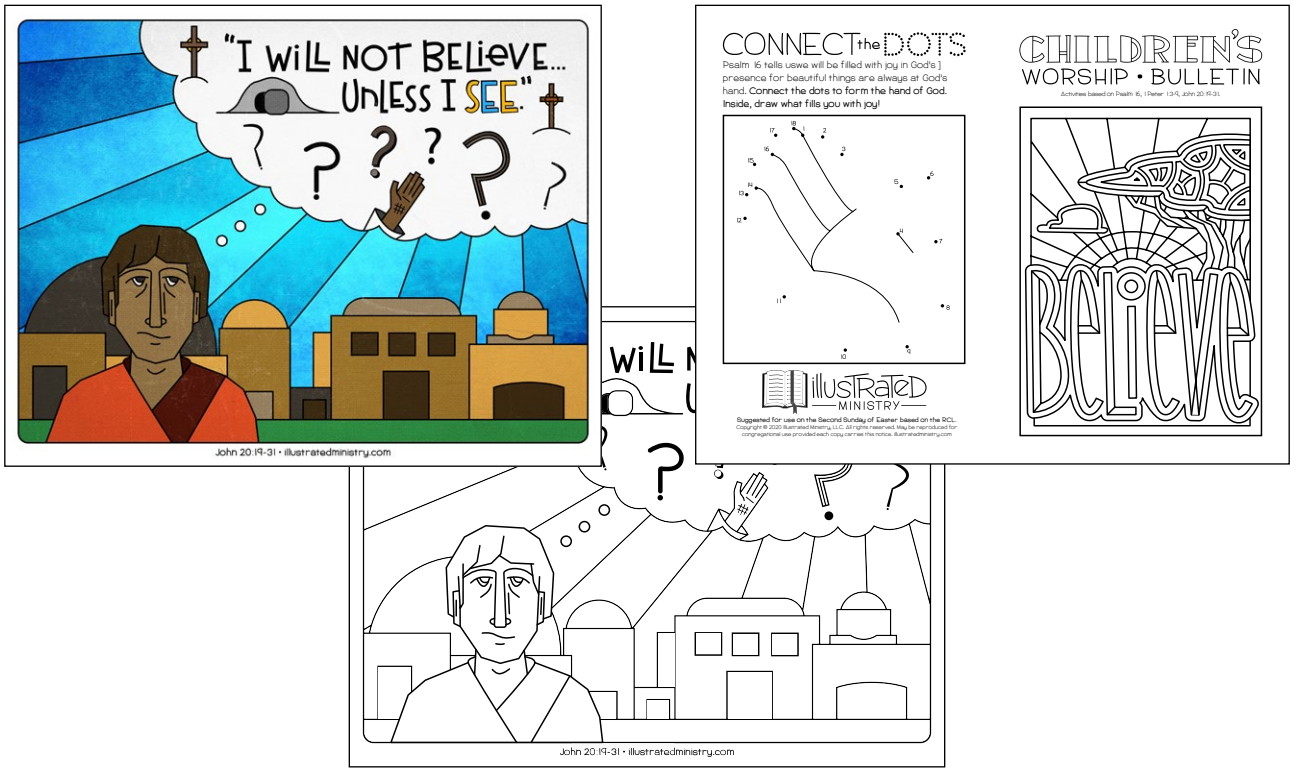
Faith Formation Resources for the Second Sunday of Easter



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Unless otherwise noted, scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

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RESOURCES FROM ILLUSTRATED MINISTRY

As the world struggles to adjust to life amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, necessary disruptions are affecting all aspects of our lives. Schools are closing, places of worship are canceling services, sports seasons are being suspended, and we are all adjusting to this new way of life. Illustrated Ministry hopes that these faith formation resources are meaningful and helpful to you.

We will be sending a weekly email during the COVID-19 pandemic which will include faith formation resources for all ages. We will be following the Revised Common Lectionary, and most of the resources will line up with the appropriate texts for each of the Sundays. If this resource was forwarded to you, and you would like to sign up to receive the weekly email in your inbox, you can sign up at: **illustratedministry.com/flattenthecurve**

The weekly resource consists of a variety of resources, including children's worship bulletins, devotionals, and coloring pages. There are a variety of different ways you could use these resources at home:

- As a family, put together an order of worship. You can use this as an interactive piece to the scripture reading and message/sermon.
- Use this as an individual or family devotional to reflect on throughout the week.
- Get a group of friends together, virtually, and color the coloring page and reflect on the scripture passage.
- While you watch your church's virtual worship service, your children can color the coloring page or do the activities in the children's worship bulletin.

We hope you enjoy this resource, and if you have any questions about it, you can always reach us at info@illustratedministry.com. If you want to connect with others and see how they are using our resources, you can also follow us on social media:

Facebook:	**fb.com/illustratedmin**
Instagram:	**instagram.com/illustratedmin**
Twitter:	**twitter.com/illustratedmin**
Pinterest:	**pinterest.com/illustratedmin**

Our Facebook Group is a growing community. If you're looking for ideas and suggestions for using this resource, you can request to join here: **fb.com/groups/illustratedmin**

Peace,

The Illustrated Ministry Team

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SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER - APRIL 19

Describe a time when someone really listened to you and helped you figure out what you really needed when you were scared or upset about something.

Note: If you are with a group, have each person take a turn sharing.

Scripture Reading: John 20:19-31

> *When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*
>
> *But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."*
>
> *A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."*

Reflection

In today's scripture, Jesus visits the disciples after he's been raised from the dead. For those brief moments, it must have been a joyous time when Jesus came back to be with them. Maybe even a bit comforting in a very troubling time. But it wasn't for Thomas because he wasn't there. He didn't experience what the others experienced.

The disciples were living in a very scary time. Their friend had died, and now their lives might be at risk because of their association with Jesus. They locked themselves up in a house and felt unsafe. They needed assurance; they needed to know what they were putting their lives at risk for was worth it.

We don't know where Thomas was and why he missed seeing Jesus. Did he go out to get some groceries? Perhaps he volunteered to pick up some essential supplies to use until it was safe to go out again. When Thomas returned, his friends told him all about how Jesus had visited them.

Imagine how Thomas must have felt. His life was at risk by being away from this safe house, and the very moment he comes back to safety, they tell him Jesus showed up. Jesus is alive! But Thomas couldn't believe it; nope, not unless he saw Jesus for himself.

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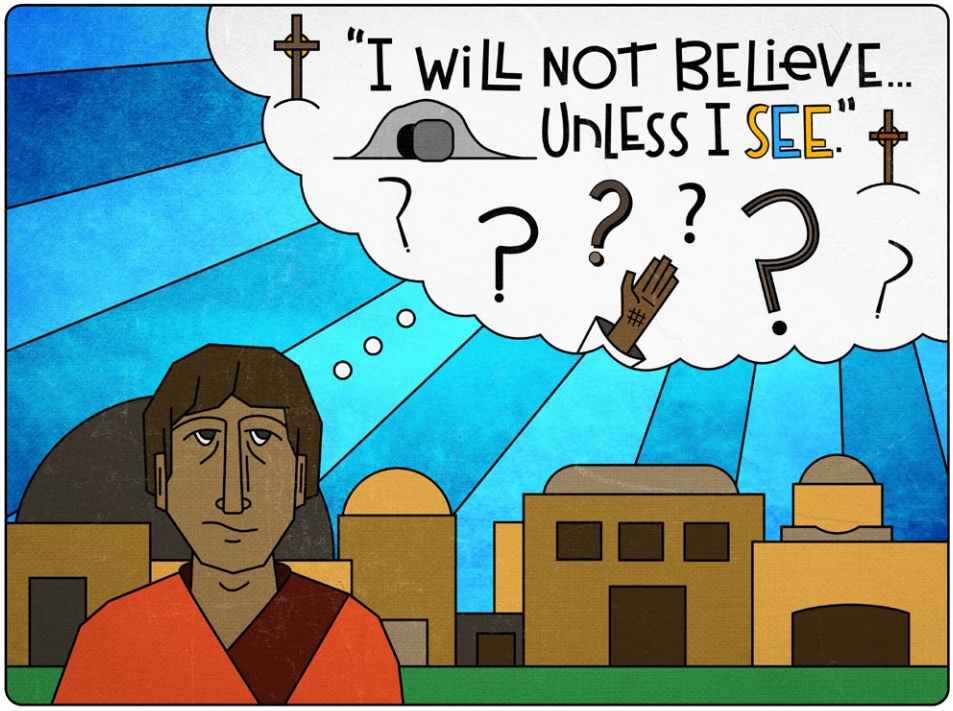
At first glance, it is tempting to dismiss Thomas for not believing. But then, we know the rest of the story.

When Jesus appeared to the disciples a second time, a week later, Thomas was there. Jesus didn't mind that Thomas had a hard time believing what his friends told him. Instead of getting irritated with Thomas, Jesus gently shows him the scars on his hands. Thomas needed this assurance. Jesus knew Thomas's disbelief came from a place of pain and grief, and maybe even an attempt to protect the little bit of hope Thomas had left.

Sometimes, when we feel frightened or upset, or even incredibly happy, how we respond to something might not fully explain all the feelings and concerns we are holding onto at that moment. When someone says something that seems a bit unbelievable or doesn't make sense, it can be easy to dismiss them.

Thomas needed to see Jesus' wounds, and Jesus gave Thomas what Thomas needed. In doing so, Jesus honored Thomas's many feelings, worries, and fears.

We are all still living with uncertainty and fears due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We can show love and kindness to each other by paying extra attention to the people around us, listening carefully, and honoring the feelings about what we're going through together.



John 20:19-31 • illustratedministry.com

Discussion Questions

1. What do you imagine Thomas felt when his friends told him Jesus appeared to them when he wasn't there?
2. When have you had some big feelings? Did you have a hard time, at the moment, sharing what you needed? What did you realize later that you needed and who helped you feel better?
3. Jesus was kind to Thomas and assured him that his feelings were okay. What kinds of things do you need when you have big feelings, like being frustrated, upset, or sad?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for this story about Jesus, Thomas, and the disciples. Help us show kindness and love to one another, especially when big feelings arise. Give us the strength to say what we need. **Amen.**

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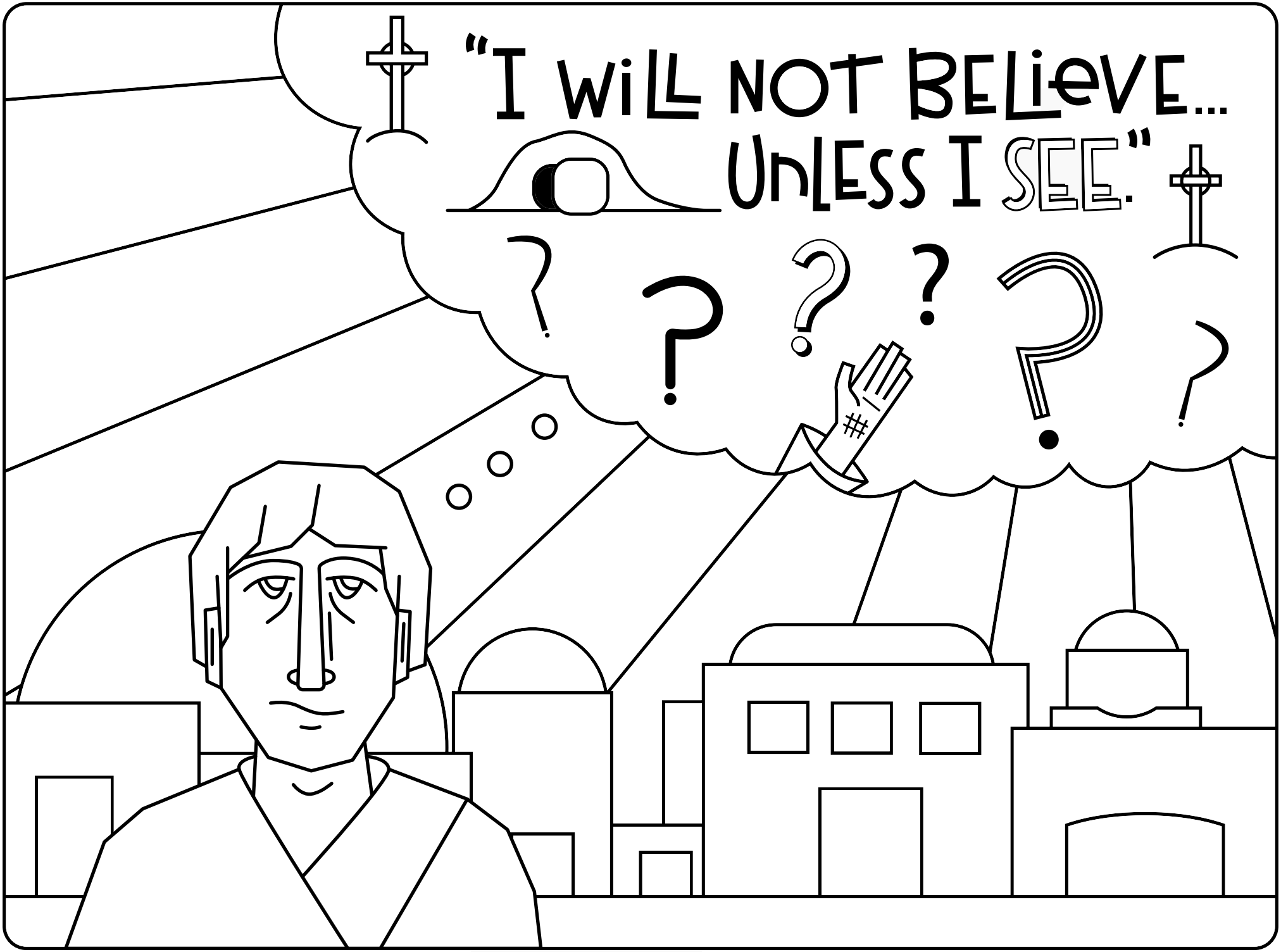
"I WILL NOT BELIEVE... UNLESS I SEE."

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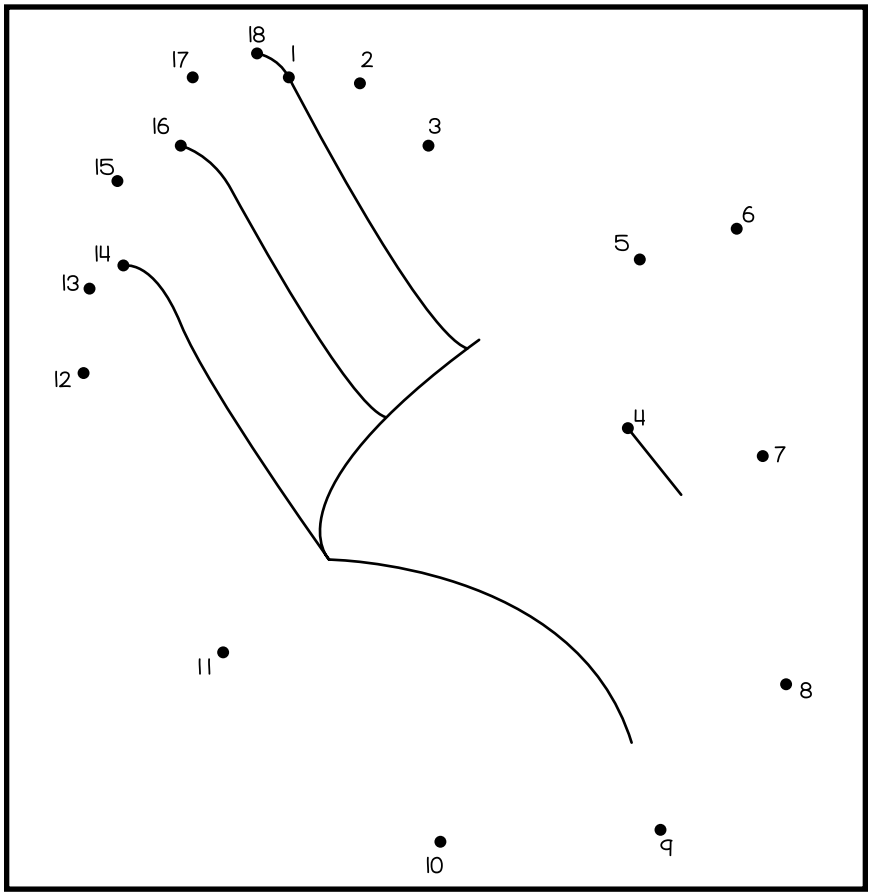
CONNECT the DOTS

Psalm 16 tells uswe will be filled with joy in God's] presence for beautiful things are always at God's hand. **Connect the dots to form the hand of God. Inside, draw what fills you with joy!**



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Suggested for use on the Second Sunday of Easter based on the RCL.

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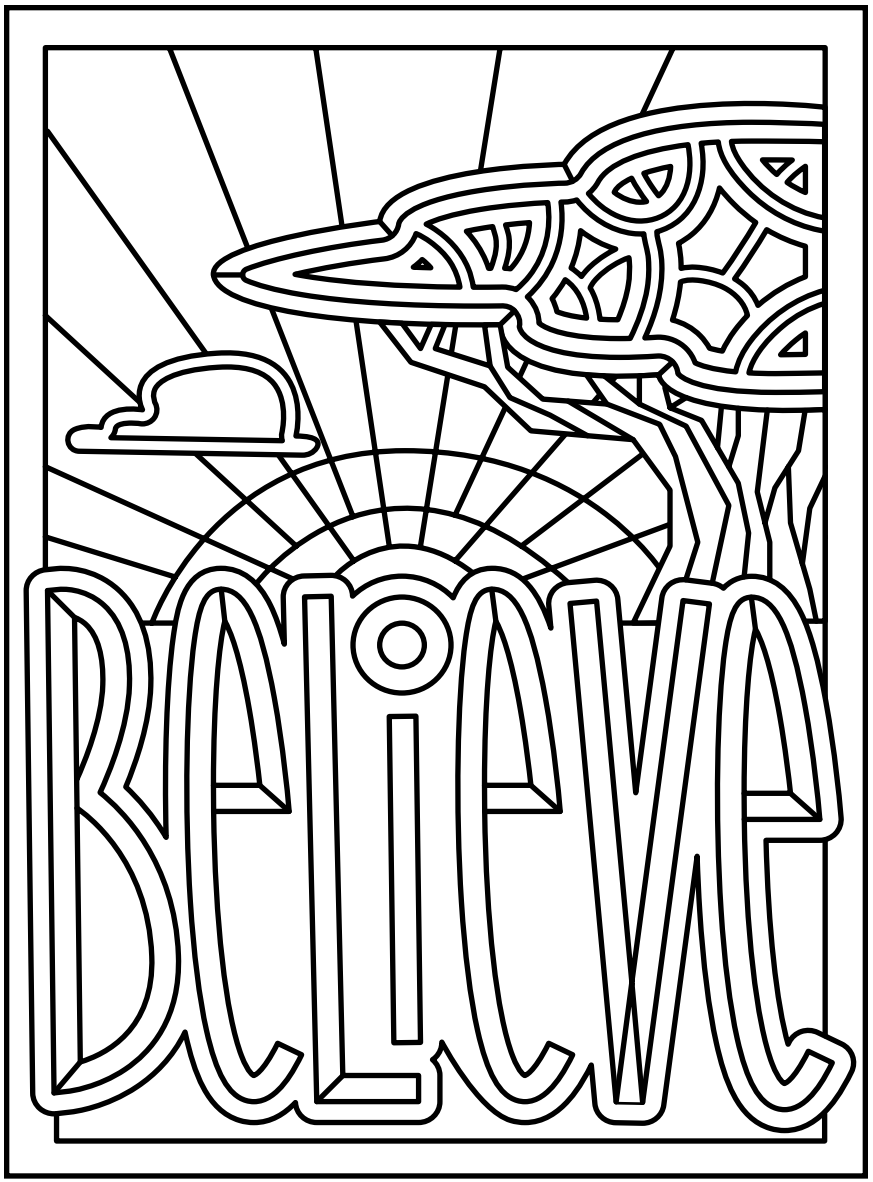
CHILDREN'S WORSHIP • BULLETIN

Activities based on Psalm 16, 1 Peter 1:3-9, John 20:19-31.

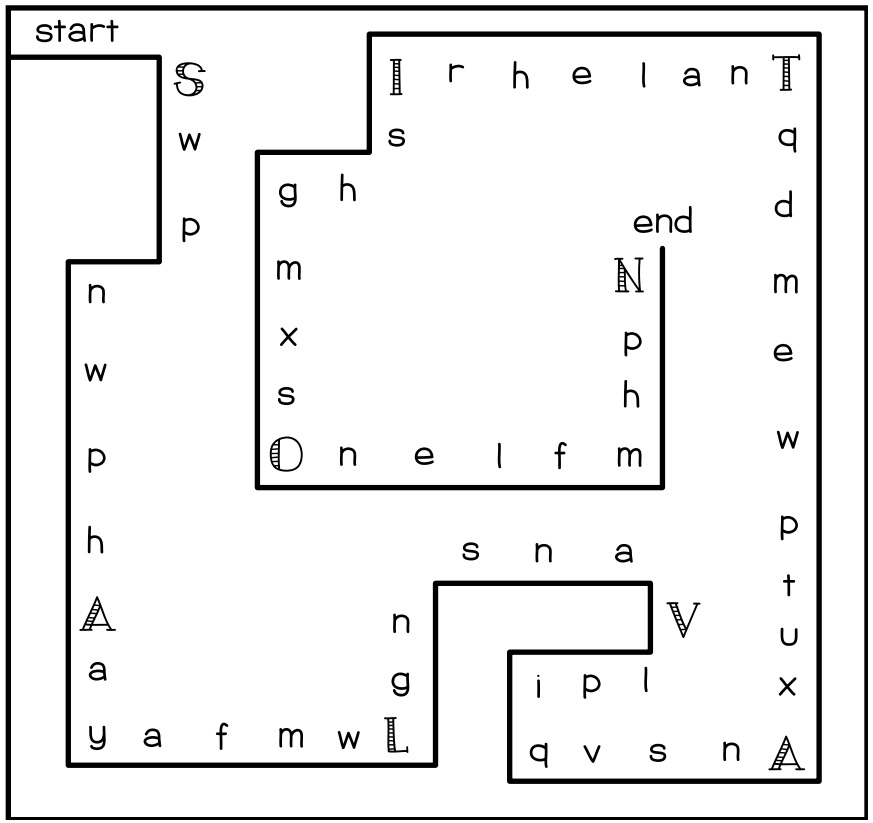


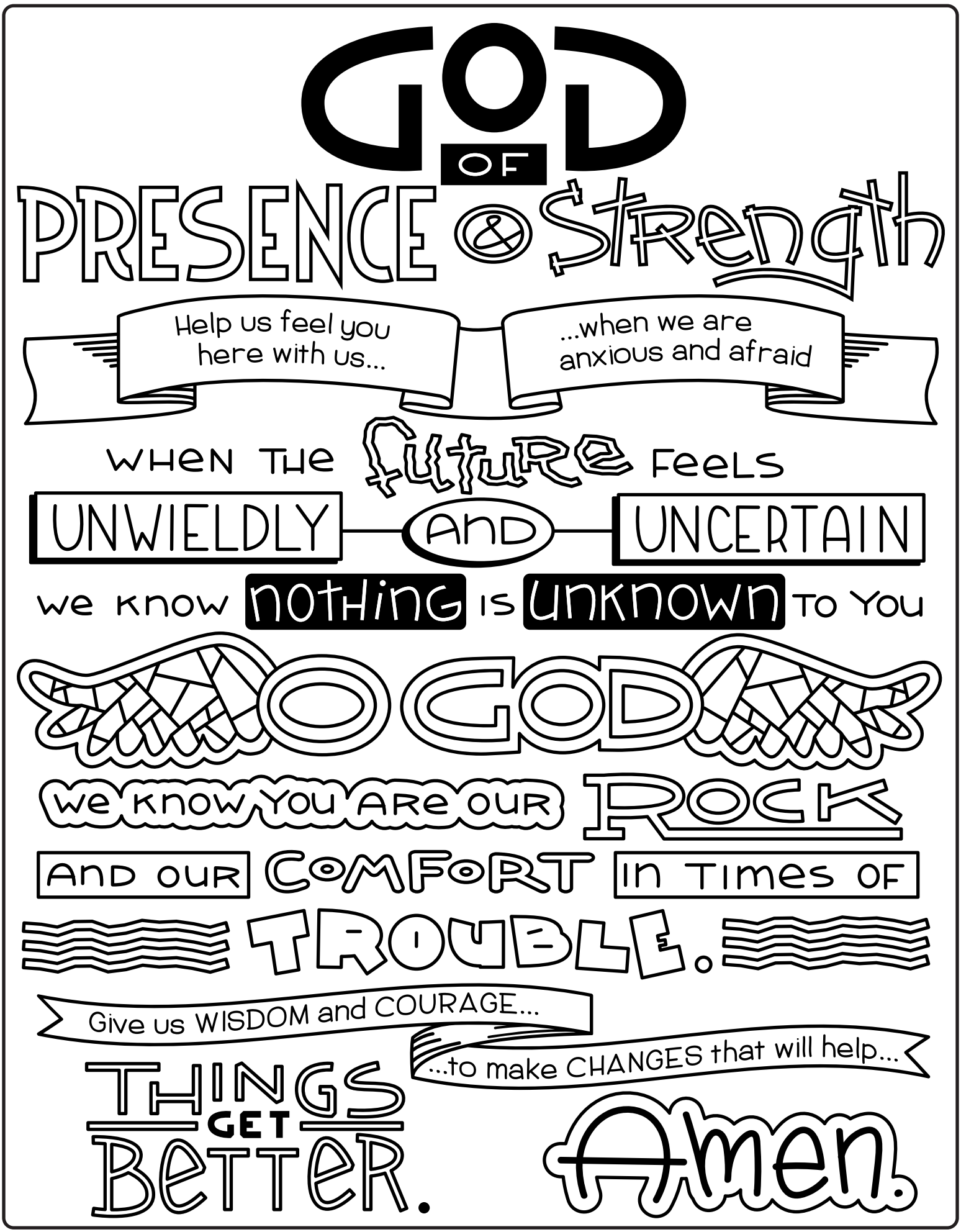
DRAW IT

When Jesus appears to his disciples for the first time after rising from death, they are amazed and shocked. They can't believe it's really him! Jesus says, "Peace be with you," and "receive the Holy Spirit." **Imagine you are sitting with the disciples. What does it look like to receive the Holy Spirit from Jesus?**

FOLLOW the PATH

What does Jesus offer us through his faithfulness and love? **Follow the path of letters, and each time you come to a capital letter, write that letter down at the bottom of the page. When you get to the end of the path, see what message is spelled out below.**




GOD
OF
PRESENCE & Strength
Help us feel you here with us...
...when we are anxious and afraid
WHEN THE future FEELS
UNWIELDLY AND UNCERTAIN
we know nothing is unknown to You
O GOD
we know you are our ROCK
and our COMFORT in times of
TROUBLE.
Give us WISDOM and COURAGE...
...to make CHANGES that will help...
THINGS GET BETTER.
Amen.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

ARIANNE BRAITHWAITE LEHN is a mother, one half of a clergy couple, writer, and ordained minister with the Presbyterian Church (USA). As a South Dakota native, Arianne originally planned on Law School until God called her to Taiwan where everything changed. She later graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary (Chicago). She and her family live in Wilmette, Illinois. Arianne is the author of *Ash and Starlight: Prayers for the Chaos and Grace of Daily Life.* You can connect with Arianne and her writing at her website ariannebraithwaitelehn.com.

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