



1 Welcome Others as God Welcomes You

WAYS TO PRACTICE AT HOME:

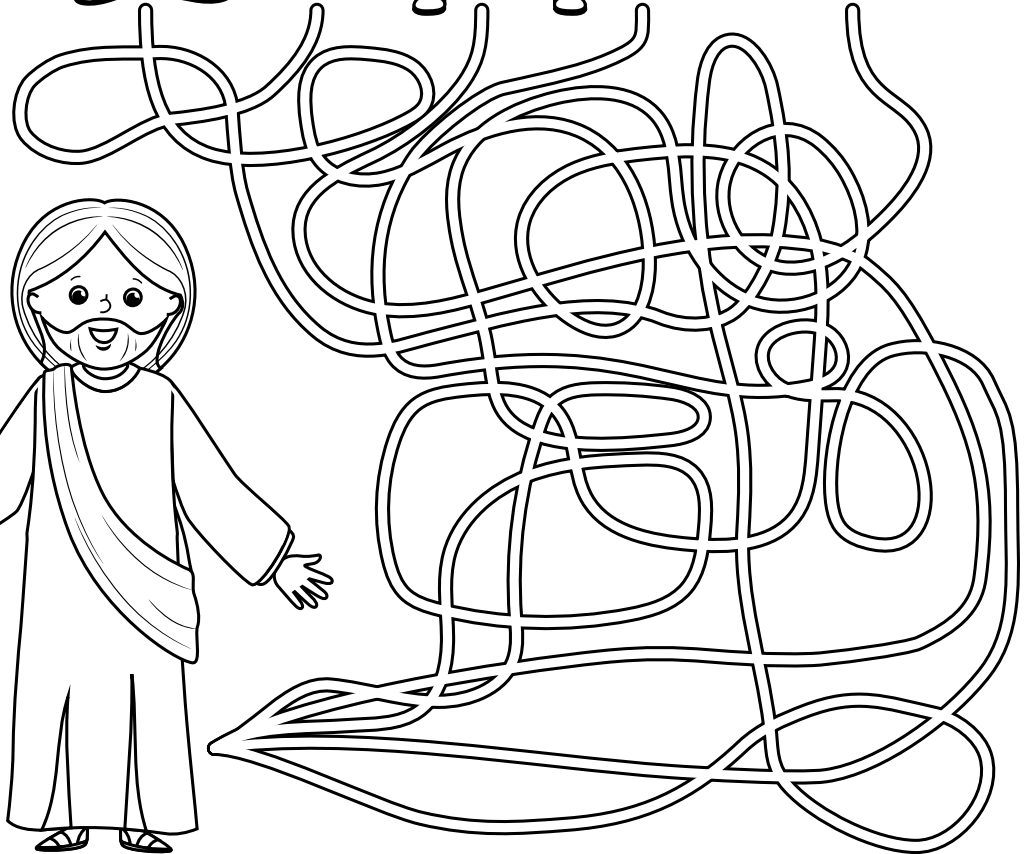
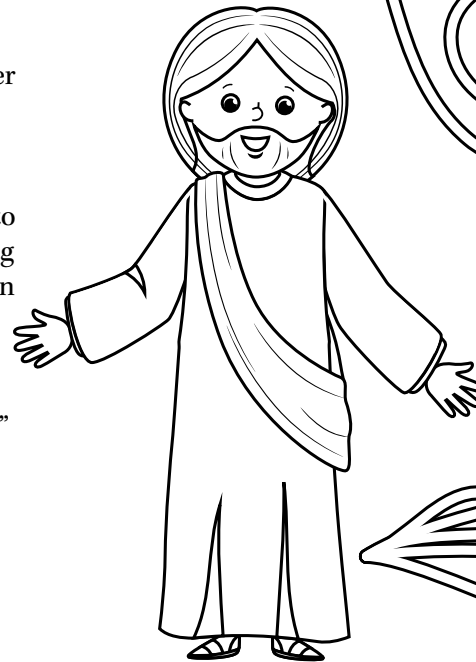
God welcomes all of creation, and God welcomes us too! We can follow Jesus' example. As he welcomed children to come

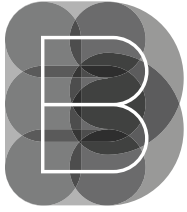
to him, we can welcome all we meet as God's children.

- Teach the children how to say "welcome" in several different languages that may be heard in your church or community. Encourage the children to greet people in the church and community who might know these languages when they see them during the week.
- Adopt a "grand-friend." Many families are spread apart geographically, leaving grandparents and grandchildren, alike, missing out on regular companionship with another generation. Consider inviting an older adult in your congregation to be your "grand-friend."
- Take a look at the entrance to your home. Talk together about how it is welcoming or could be more welcoming to others. Consider changes you might make, such as adding lighting, trimming back foliage, or making a welcome sign for your front door.
- Take a nature walk or a walk around your neighborhood. Call out things that God has created. As each one is named, together say, "God welcomes you, (*tree*). I do too!"

Go out today and greet everyone you meet as a child of God, welcoming them as God has welcomed you.

Follow the lines from each of the children to find Jesus.





BIBLE STORY

Based on Genesis 1 and Luke 18:15–17

In the beginning, God smiled and began to create. God swept over the waters like a wind while deciding what to make first. “Let there be light,” God said. Light and darkness became two separate things—day and night. God welcomed the light and the darkness and said they were good, and that was the end of the first day.

The next day after the light came, God decided to separate the water that drops from the sky in rain and snow from the water that is down below in rivers, lakes, and the ocean. God welcomed both the water in the sky and the water below and said they were good, and that was the end of the second day.

On the third day, God looked at the waters below and gathered them into particular places so dry land could appear. God planted all kinds of flowers, bushes, and trees on the land that produced yummy fruits and vegetables. God welcomed the land and all that grows on it, and God saw that these things were good.

On the fourth day, God gathered some of the light together to create the sun and the stars. God called the moon into being for the night. God welcomed the sun, moon, and stars and saw that they were good.

On the fifth day, God began to create the creatures of the sea, everything that swims, and the creatures of the air, everything that flies. Can you name some of these creatures? God welcomed all of these we have named and all the others whose names we don’t know, and God saw that they were good.

On the sixth day, God created the creatures of the land, all kinds of creatures. Some were tall, and some were short. Some had spots, and others had stripes. Some ate meat, and some ate plants. Can you name some of these land creatures? God welcomed all of these we have named and all the others whose names we don’t know. But God wasn’t done yet. God created humans to be in God’s image and to continue to welcome all of God’s creation.

Does God welcome you? How do you know?

Many years after all these things were created, God’s Son, Jesus, came to earth, and one of the things he made sure to do was to welcome children. “These young ones are very good,” said God, as Jesus talked to them, hugged them, and blessed them and their families. We continue to welcome each other today through smiling, waving, and baptizing new people into God’s community.

GOD WELCOMES US. LET’S WELCOME ALL!

