



Sunday, May 17, 2026  
7th Sunday of Easter  
Year A

# The Ascension

Gospel Reading: Luke 24:44-53

**First Reading:**

Acts 1:1-11

**Second Reading:**

Ephesians 1:15-23

**Key Verse:**

While [Jesus] was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.

– Luke 24:51

**The Point:**

After his resurrection, Jesus left to be with God.

**Liturgical Color:**

White



# Activities & Supplies

## Into the Word

### With God

Share a holy time.

5 min.

- Groupings Guide
- Materials for chosen cross+generational grouping

## Seasons of the Word

### Butterfly Points

Create an ongoing art project.

10 min.

- Activity Sheet A
- Colored or white paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Tape

## Learning the Word

### I Wonder... Study

Imagine being with the disciples.

15 min.

- Bibles
- White board or mural paper
- Marker

## The Word in the World

### Speed Scripture

Review the stories from the year.

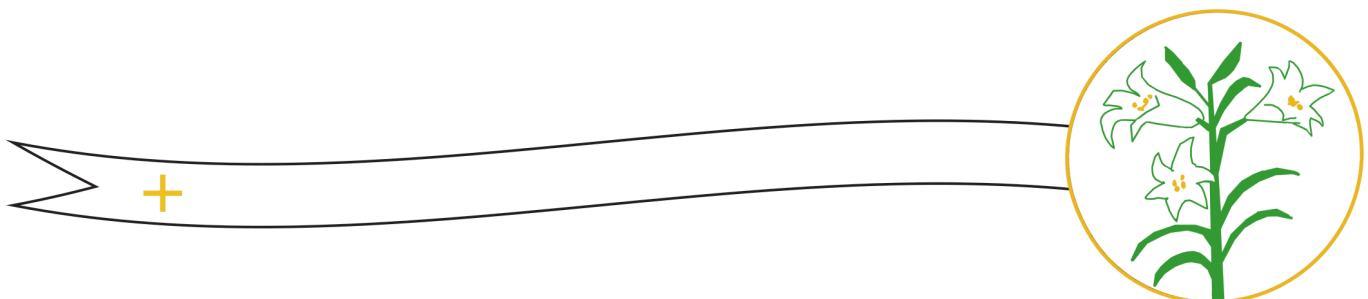
20 min.

- Bibles
- Activity Sheet B



## Beyond the Gospel

<b>The Ascension, Version 2</b> Compare passages.	<b>10 min.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bibles</li><li>• Paper</li><li>• Pens or pencils</li></ul>
<b>Additional Activities</b>		
<b>Ascension Art</b> Search online for famous images.	<b>10 min.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internet-connected devices</li><li>• Optional: projection</li></ul>
<b>He Ascended into Heaven</b> Read the Apostles' Creed.	<b>5 min.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Copies of the Apostles' Creed</li></ul>
<b>God in the World</b> Create images of God's presence.	<b>10 min.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper</li><li>• Markers or crayons</li><li>• Optional: other art supplies</li></ul>
<b>Sending</b>	<b>5 min.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Word @ Home take-home sheet</li></ul>





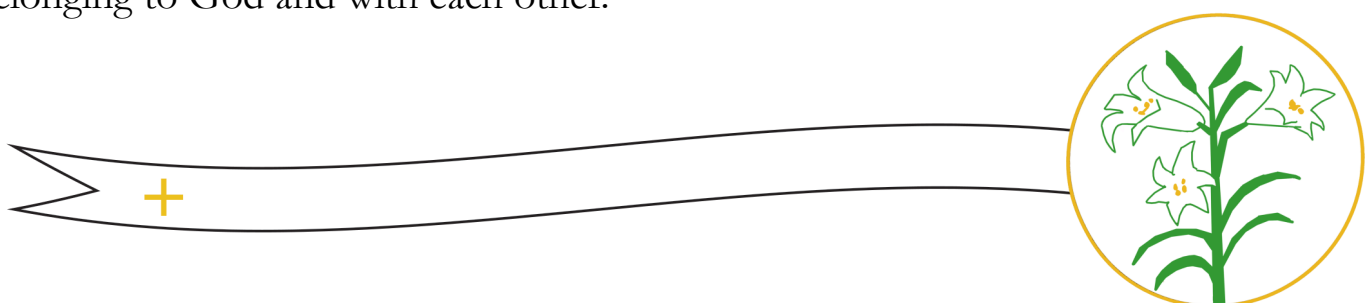
Cross+generational, or intergenerational, ministry has at its core the concept that faith is formed through meaningful relationships. When we connect with people of a different generation, we are able to learn from them and share our own experiences, no matter what age we are. We find our place in God’s story best by exploring that story as community.

Effective cross+generational experiences are:

- *Experiential*
- *Interactive*
- *Engaging*
- *Story-centered*
- *Home-based*
- *Equalizing*

all of which promote an **encounter with God**. All of the activities included in this leader guide are intended to engage these principles, through intentional intergenerational interaction and active, creative activities that bring the Bible story to life in our lives.

We pass on the faith through every action, experience, or relationship that nurtures a transformative relationship of trust with God and shapes the way we see and interact with God’s world. When we do this in meaningful, intergenerational relationships, our faith is enriched from the diversity of the experiences we share with each other. Our communities are strengthened, and we have confidence in our sense of belonging to God and with each other.



# Background for Leaders

As we have worshipped and learned together in the time between Easter and Pentecost, we have heard Jesus reassuring his disciples that they will not be alone. Now, he finally leaves them, but he promises them that the Holy Spirit will be with them.

## **Gospel Summary: Luke 24:44-53**

### **The Ascension**

On the same day of the women's testimony of the angels at Jesus' empty tomb and right after the encounter two disciples had with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, Jesus appeared to all his disciples. Jesus convinced them that he is real and is their friend and teacher. He now teaches them and opens their minds to understand Scripture. After commissioning them to be his witnesses and promising them power from on high, he leads them out of Jerusalem and is carried up into the sky. The disciples respond by worshipping him and rejoicing.

## **First Reading Summary: Acts 1:1-11**

The writer of the Gospel of Luke continues the story with the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. As this book begins, the resurrected Jesus promises his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit and commissions them to be his witnesses throughout the world. After this, Jesus was lifted up and disappeared into a cloud. As the disciples were watching him, two white-robed men appeared beside them and promised that Jesus would come again.

## **Second Reading Summary: Ephesians 1:15-23**

The letter writer gives thanks for the faith and love of the believers in the city of Ephesus. He prays that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they know the hope and greatness of God's power. This power could be seen in Jesus' resurrection and ascension to an honored place at God's side. Jesus is above everything, including the church, of which he is the head of the body.

### **The Point:**

#### **After his resurrection, Jesus left to be with God.**

God became human in the birth of Jesus. In doing so, Jesus voluntarily limited himself to be in specific places at specific times, just like we are. But after his resurrection and appearances to his disciples, he returned to heaven so that he can again be unlimited. He is present with us everywhere and at every time.

### **Festivals & Seasons: White**

White or gold is used for the celebration of Easter Sunday. The gold color symbolizes that this day is the "queen of feasts," unique in the entire church year. The rest of the Sundays following Easter also use white paraments, suggesting the joy of the resurrection.

### **Prayer of Preparation:**

Jesus, we see you taken to be with God. Help us to remember that you send the Holy Spirit to remain with us. Amen.

# Lesson Plan

## Into the Word

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### With God

5 min.

Share a holy time.

#### *Supplies:*

- Groupings Guide
- Materials for chosen cross+generational grouping

#### *Preparation:*

1. Determine how you would like to group participants at their tables (in a cross+generational grouping), using the Groupings Guide.
2. Prepare the materials indicated in the Guide.

#### *Instructions:*

1. Welcome the class and instruct them to group themselves cross+generationally according to the method you have selected from the Groupings Guide.
2. **If someone is sitting alone, please introduce yourself and invite them to join you. Young children who are not comfortable leaving their families should sit at a table with someone in their family.**
3. **Today we will hear the story of Jesus' ascending to heaven to be with God. What does it mean to you to be with God? Do you have a memory of a time in your life when God seemed especially close?**
4. **If you have a time that you remember feeling close to God, share it with your small group. If you do not have a specific memory, share what you think it would be like to be in God's presence.**



# Seasons of the Word

## Butterfly Points

10 min.

Create an ongoing art project.

### *Supplies:*

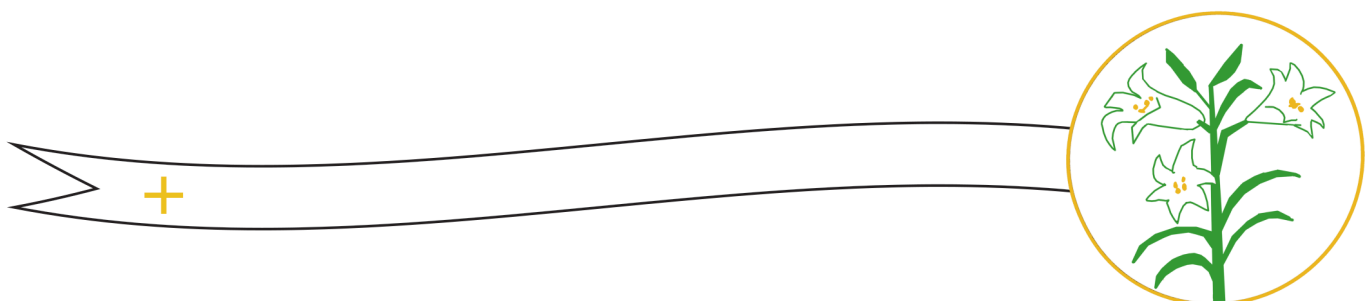
- Activity Sheet A
- Colored or white paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Tape

### *Preparation:*

1. Make copies of Activity Sheet A on colored or white paper so that each person will have at least one butterfly. You can cut the sheet to help distribute the butterflies more efficiently.
2. Leave the butterflies up for one more week. We will add a final Pentecost touch to them next week.

### *Instructions:*

1. **This is our final week in the Easter season, and our last week to add butterflies to our mural. Next week, we will complete it with a touch of Pentecost celebration.**
2. **Again, today you will decorate a butterfly and pick one point from the story to write on that butterfly. We will add these to the flock of beautiful butterflies on the wall.**
3. **Today we are going to hear the story of the ascension of Jesus. This is the final story of his Easter appearances when he is taken away from the disciples and ascends to heaven to be with God.**
4. Distribute the butterflies from Activity Sheet A.
5. **As we learn this story, decorate and cut out your butterfly. At the end of Learning the Word, write something that you heard or learned on your butterfly, and tape it to the wall. Let's hear our story.**



# Learning the Word

## I Wonder... Study

15 min.

Imagine being with the disciples.

### Supplies:

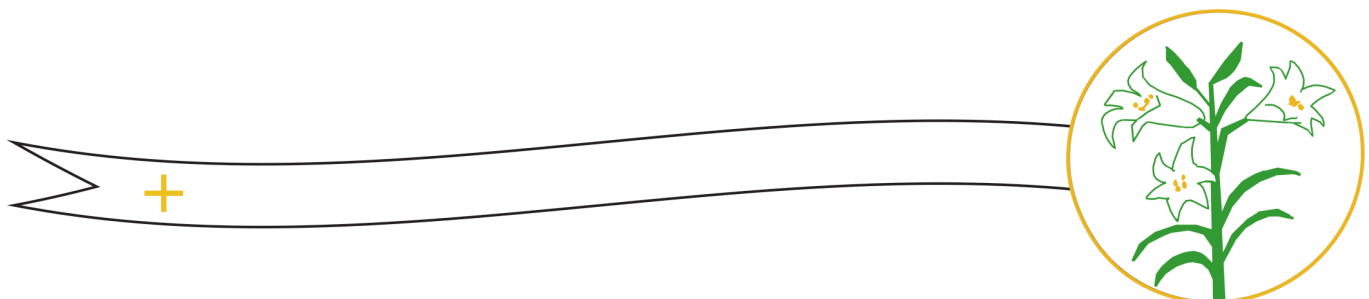
- Bibles
- White board or mural paper
- Marker

### Preparation:

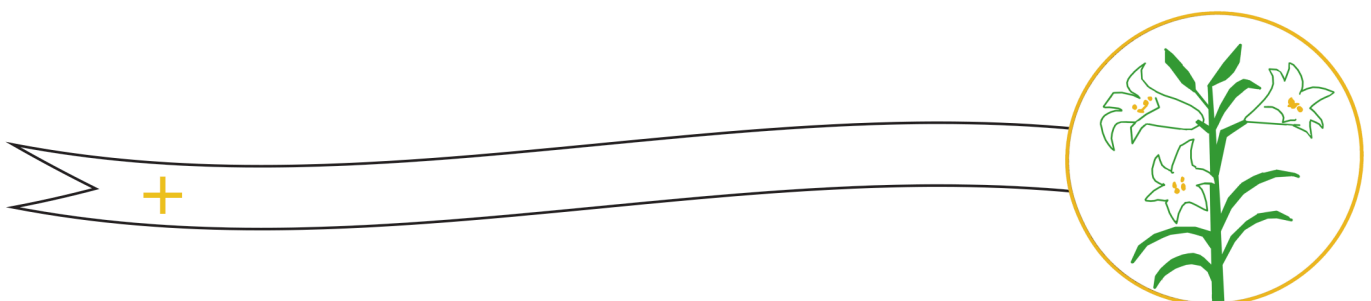
1. Make sure that there are enough Bibles so that there is at least one for every two people.
2. Divide the white board or mural paper into five columns. Write the headings “saw,” “heard,” “felt,” “thought,” and “said” at the tops of the columns.

### Instructions:

1. Today we hear the last story following Jesus’ resurrection and before we learn about Pentecost. We are going to learn about it by asking the same five questions of each section. Each question begins with “I wonder...” and will help us imagine what the disciples might have been experiencing during this remarkable happening.
2. We will look at the Bible passage in sections. Let’s start by turning to Luke 24.
3. We will start with verses 44 and 45. Let’s read them and think about the disciples at this amazing moment. Let’s wonder together:
  - I wonder what they saw.
  - I wonder what they heard.
  - I wonder what they felt.
  - I wonder what they thought.
  - I wonder what they said.
4. Record responses in the appropriate column on the white board or mural paper. Leave enough room for each section of verses.



5. Continue with verses 46-47, 48, 49, 50, 51, and 52-53.
6. **The disciples experienced so many different things during their time with Jesus, but now that time with Jesus on earth is over. Next week, we will hear about the coming of the Holy Spirit—the Advocate that we learned about last week.**
7. If you have not done so, complete and hang the butterflies for Seasons of the Word at this time.



# The Word in the World

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## Speed Scripture

20 min.

Review the stories from the year.

### *Supplies:*

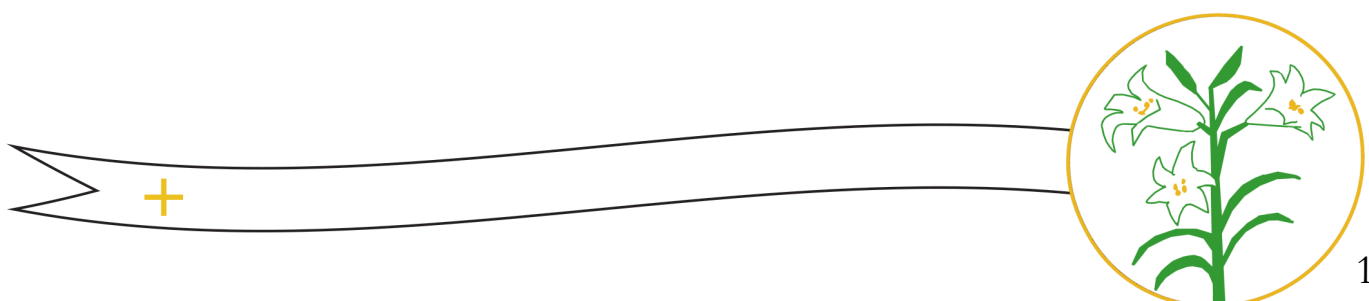
- Bibles
- Activity Sheet B

### *Preparation:*

1. Make copies of Activity Sheet B so that every small group has a couple to share.

### *Instructions:*

1. **Like the disciples, we have spent a year together learning more about Scripture and the stories of Jesus. Some of these stories were easy to understand and others were more challenging. On this Activity Sheet you will find a list of all the stories that we talked about this year.**
2. **Take a moment to look over this sheet. Do you remember all of the stories? We are going to review them by inviting each small group to choose a favorite story and present the very basics in sped-up fashion to the rest of the group. Then, the other groups will try to guess what story they are telling.**
3. Allow groups time to prepare and share their speed story.
4. **We have learned a lot about God this year in our time together. When you are sharing these stories with others, how will you tell them? You probably will not speed share the stories. What are one or two things that you can share about the things that you have learned here?**
5. Allow small groups to briefly discuss.



# Beyond the Gospel

## The Ascension, Version 2

10 min.

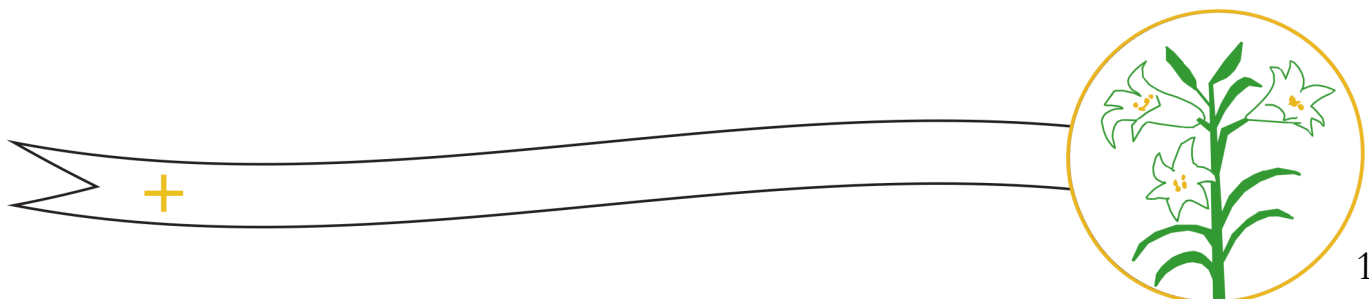
Compare passages.

### *Supplies:*

- Bibles
- Paper
- Pens or pencils

### *Instructions:*

1. The writer of the Gospel of Luke continues the story with the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. As this book begins, the resurrected Jesus promises his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit and commissions them to be his witnesses throughout the world. After this, Jesus is lifted up and disappears into a cloud. As the disciples watch him, two white-robed men appear beside them and promise that Jesus would come again.
2. This passage from Acts is very similar to what we read earlier in Luke. Did you know that the same person likely wrote both books? Optional: Point participants to Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-2 to show the connection.
3. In your small groups, read the account of this event in both our Gospel lesson in Luke 24:50-53 and the reading in Acts 1:6-11. Optional: Include Luke 24:36-49 and Acts 1:3-5 to show a few other similarities and differences. Make a list of the things that are the same in these two stories. Then, make a list of the differences.
4. If time allows, invite groups to share their lists with the large group.



## Additional Activities

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### Ascension Art

10 min.

Search online for famous images.

#### *Supplies:*

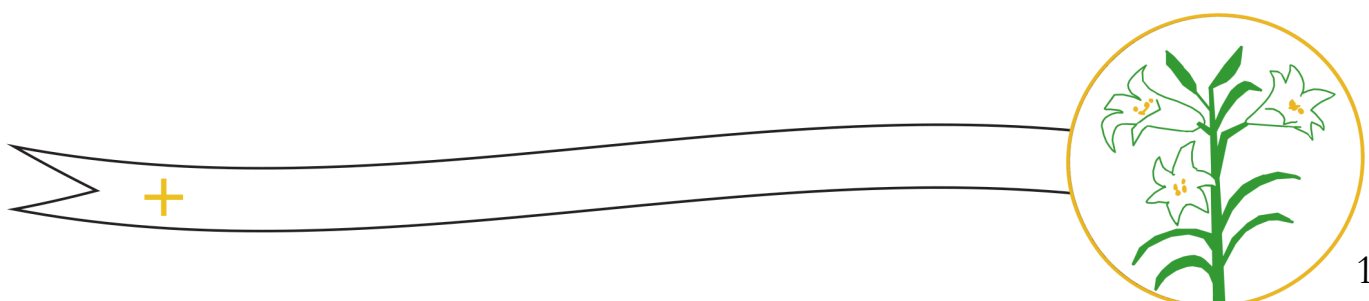
- Internet-connected devices
- Optional: projection

#### *Preparation:*

1. Verify that participants will have access to a reliable Internet connection.

#### *Instructions:*

1. In our Learning the Word section, we talked about what the disciples must have been thinking and seeing and feeling and hearing. It is hard to imagine what it would be like to witness an event like the ascension.
2. Many artists have tried to picture this event over the centuries. Let's see how they imagined it happening.
3. Use your Internet-connected device to search for "the ascension of Jesus images," or "Jesus' ascension art." Share what you find with your small group.
4. If possible, project the images for the large group.



## Additional Activities

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### He Ascended into Heaven

5 min.

Read the Apostles' Creed.

#### *Supplies:*

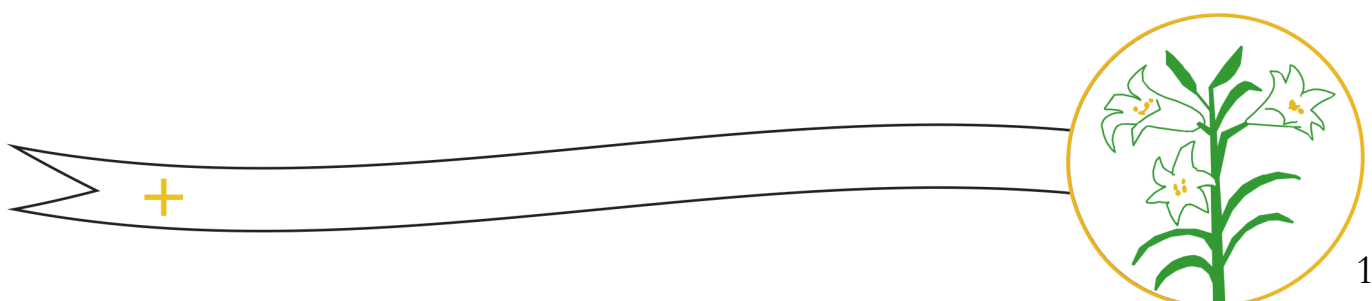
- Copies of the Apostles' Creed

#### *Preparation:*

1. Find the text of the Apostles' Creed in a hymnal or on the Internet. Make copies of the Apostles' Creed or project the creed for people to read together.
2. If your congregation does not regularly use the Apostles' Creed in worship, adjust the script below to fit your congregation's practices.

#### *Instructions:*

1. **Did you realize that we talk about this story every Sunday in worship? When do we mention the ascension story during our worship time?** [*When we say the Apostles' Creed.*]
2. **Let's say or read the Creed together. Stop when you hear the part about Ascension Day.**
3. After you have pointed out the phrase "he ascended into heaven," continue saying the rest of the Creed together.



## Additional Activities

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### God in the World

10 min.

Create images of God's presence.

#### *Supplies:*

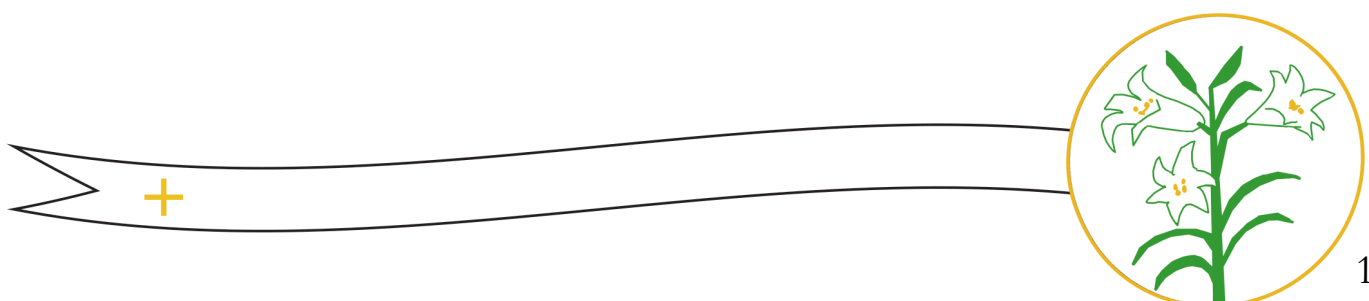
- Paper
- Markers or crayons
- Optional: other art supplies

#### *Preparation:*

1. To make this a longer activity, provide a variety of art supplies.

#### *Instructions:*

1. We have talked about Jesus going to heaven to be with God, and at the very beginning of our time together today, we talked about times that we have experienced God's presence. Now, let's look at where we see God in our world.
2. Use the paper and markers or crayons (and other art supplies) to create a picture of where and how we see God in our world. Jesus may have left the earth in his bodily form, but he is still very much alive and active in our world today through the work of the Holy Spirit!
3. Allow participants to share their creations in their small groups or large group as desired.



## Sending

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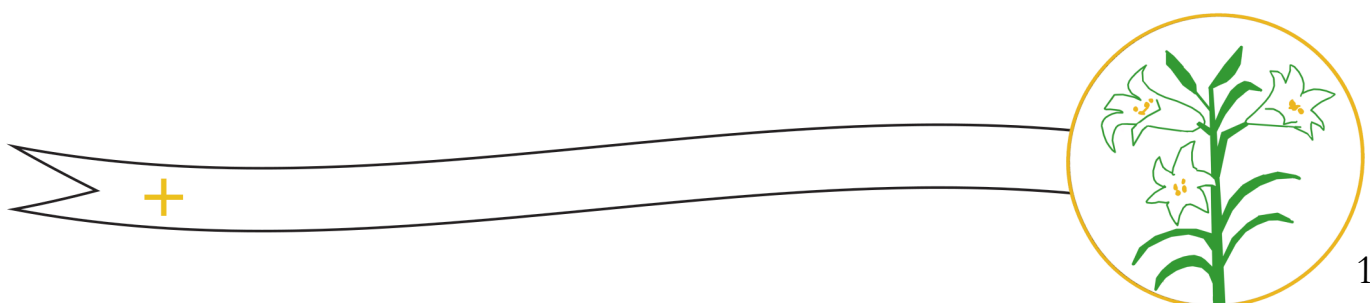
Before ending class, come together to pray. Use the following or say your own prayer.

As we close in prayer, take a moment to think of your “what now” doubts and fears for this coming week. We will share a time of silence during the prayer. If you would like to share your “what now” out loud you can; simply end your petition by asking, “What now, God?” If you would like to pray silently, please do so.

Let’s pray:

Jesus, the disciples were anxious and scared, and sometimes we are, too. Through your Word, we have walked with you. We saw you crucified, died, and buried. We have seen you come back to life and be taken up to heaven. You have kept your promises, Lord, yet sometimes we still ask, “What now?” Hear us as we ask... pause to allow for participants’ prayers. Jesus, you promise to be with us and to send your Spirit. Be with us now. Amen.

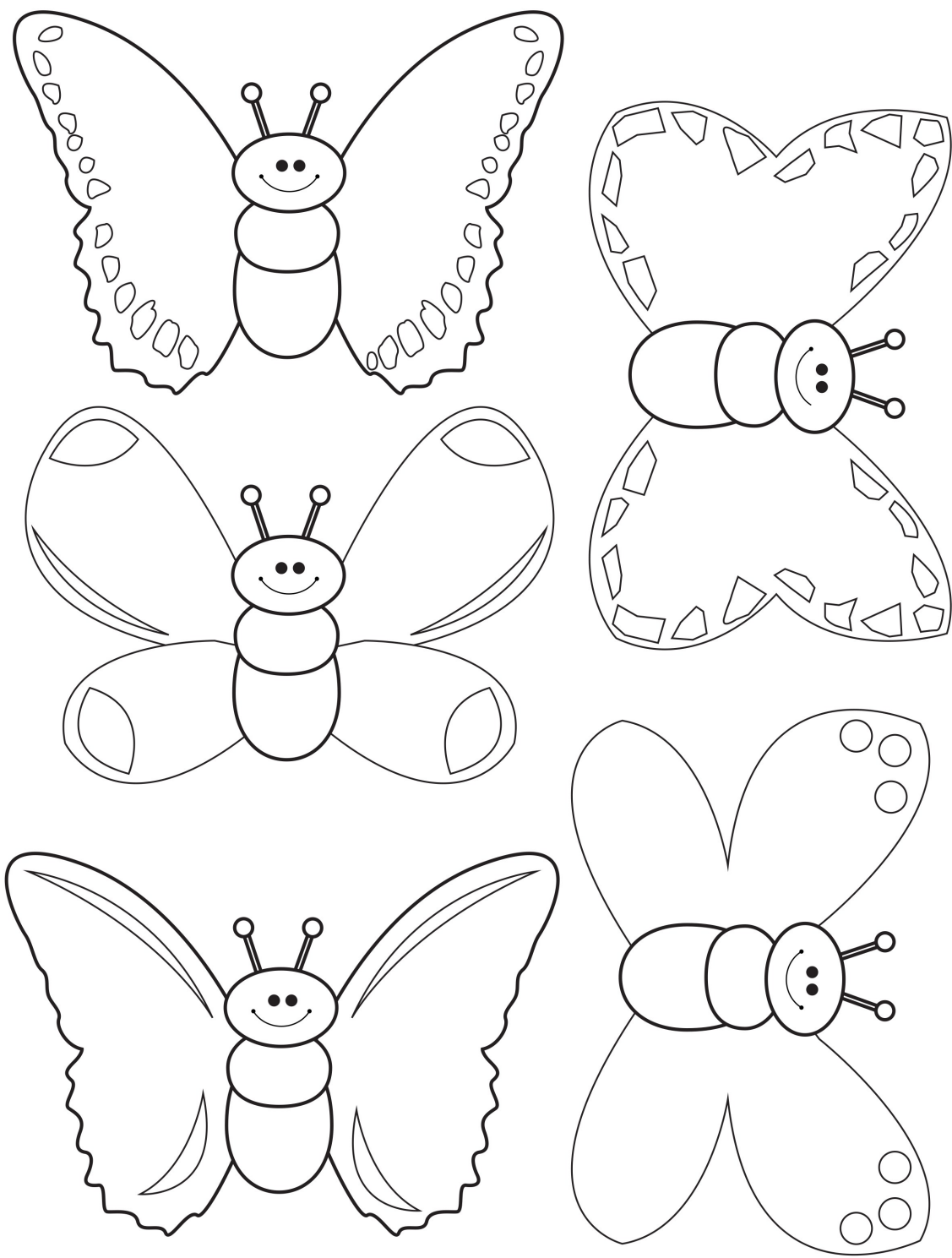
Remember to send “The Word @ Home” take-home sheet with participants before dismissing them.





# Butterfly Points

*Create an ongoing art project.*





# Speed Scripture

*Review the stories from the year.*

STORY:	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:
Committed to Jesus	Luke 14:25-33
Parables of the Lost	Luke 15:1-10
The Dishonest Manager	Luke 16:1-13
The Rich Man and Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31
Work without Applause	Luke 17:5-10
Ten Men Healed	Luke 17:11-19
Trust and Pray Always	Luke 18:1-8
Selfish and Humble	Luke 18:9-14
Love Your Enemies	Luke 6:20-31
God of the Living	Luke 20:27-38
Do Not Be Afraid	Luke 21:5-19
The Crucified King	Luke 23:33-43
Keep Awake	Matthew 24:36-44
Bear Good Fruit	Matthew 3:1-12
Are You the One?	Matthew 11:2-11
God with Us	Matthew 1:18-25
The Word Became Flesh	John 1:1-18
The Messiah Revealed	Matthew 2:1-12; Matthew 3:13-17
The Lamb of God	John 1:29-42
Jesus' Ministry Begins	Matthew 4:12-23
The Beatitudes	Matthew 5:1-12
Salt and Light	Matthew 5:13-20
The Transfiguration	Matthew 17:1-9
Satan Tempts Jesus	Matthew 4:1-11
Jesus and Nicodemus	John 3:1-17
The Samaritan Woman	John 4:5-42
The Light of the World	John 9:1-41
Jesus Raises Lazarus	John 11:1-45
Holy Week	Matthew 21:1-11; 26:14–27:66
Jesus Is Resurrected	John 20:1-18; John 20:19-31
On the Road to Emmaus	Luke 24:13-35
Abundant Life	John 10:1-10
The Way, Truth, and Life	John 14:1-14
God Promises the Spirit	John 14:15-21
The Ascension	Luke 24:44-53





# The Word @ Home

Easter 7

Gospel Reading: Luke 24:44-53

## The Point

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After his resurrection, Jesus left to be with God.

## Key Verse

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While [Jesus] was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.  
– Luke 24:51

## Scripture Summaries

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**Gospel: Luke 24:44-53**

### The Ascension

On the same day of the women's testimony of the angels at Jesus' empty tomb and right after the encounter two disciples had with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, Jesus appeared to all his disciples. Jesus convinced them that he is real and is their friend and teacher. He now teaches them and opens their minds to understand Scripture. After commissioning them to be his witnesses and promising them power from on high, he leads them out of Jerusalem and is carried up into the sky. The disciples respond by worshipping him and rejoicing.

**First Reading: Acts 1:1-11**

As this book begins, the resurrected Jesus promises his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit and commissions them to be his witnesses throughout the world. After this, Jesus was lifted up and disappeared into a cloud.

**Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23**

The letter writer prays that God would give the believers the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they know the hope and greatness of God's power.

## Seasons & Festivals

White or gold is used for the celebration of Easter Sunday. The gold color symbolizes that this day is the “queen of feasts,” unique in the entire church year. The rest of the Sundays following Easter also use white paraments, suggesting the joy of the resurrection.

## Discussion Starters

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- What do you hear in these texts of the ascension?
- What do you feel in these texts?
- What do you think about these texts?

## Prayer of the Week

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Jesus, we know that you have not left us alone. Help us to feel your holy presence. Amen.

## Daily Bible Readings

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As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you. What is God's message to us? How should we respond?

### Sunday

**Read Luke 24:44-53** Jesus ascends into heaven.  
Think of some of Jesus' words that we have studied. What are your favorites?

### Monday

**Read 1 Peter 4:1-6** Live for God.  
What is one thing that you can do this week to live for God?

### Tuesday

**Read 1 Peter 4:7-11** Love each other deeply.  
Show holy hospitality by inviting someone to your home or bringing them a small gift.

### Wednesday

**Read 1 Kings 8:54-65** Solomon blesses the people and dedicates the temple.  
Search the Internet for images of Solomon's temple.

### Thursday

**Read Acts 2:1-11** The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost.  
Place fans around the room as you hear this story.

### Friday

**Read Romans 8:14-17** We are God's children.  
God has chosen us to be beloved children. How does this affect the way you think of your relationship with God?

### Saturday

**Read Matthew 5:1-12** Jesus shares the Beatitudes.  
Read verses 3-10 responsively, with one person reading the first half of each verse and the others reading the second half.



## Blessing for the Week

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Share this blessing while tracing a cross on each person's forehead or hand with their permission:  
**Jesus will never leave you.**