



24-7 SPACES

THE VISION IS JESUS



WEEK FOUR:
THE LOVE OF JESUS

USE THIS DEEPER GUIDE ALONE,
WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS OR YOUR CHURCH
SMALL GROUP



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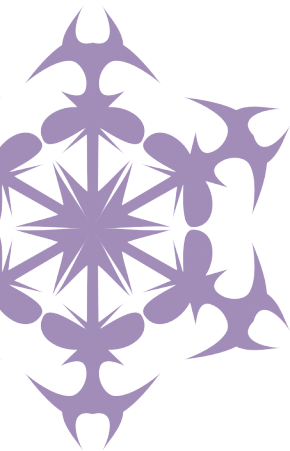


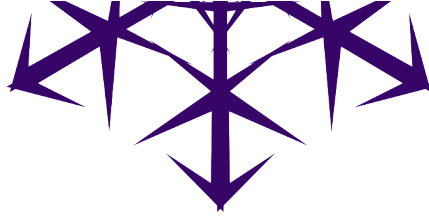
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MATERIALS NEEDED

- A Bible
- Pens
- Paper
- Scissors





REFLECT:

The following Bible verses, poems and quote are related to this week's theme: The Love of Jesus. As you read them consider what they say to us about love.

Read:

Isaiah 9:6, 1 John 4:14-16, John 13:34-35, John 3:16-17a, Revelation 22:16-17 & 20, Exodus 34:6-7a, Jeremiah 24:7

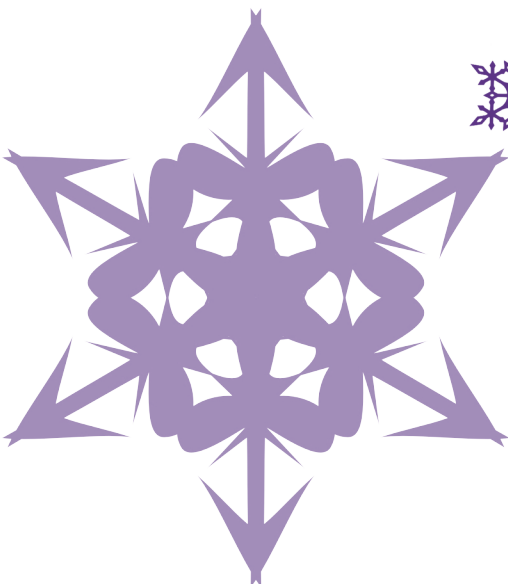
Love came down at Christmas (Christina Georgina Rossetti)

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, love divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?
Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

'My experience has shown that when we welcome people from this world of anguish, brokenness and depression, and when they gradually discover that they are wanted and loved as they are and that they have a place, then we witness a real transformation - I would even say resurrection' **(Jean Vanier)**

The House of Christmas GK Chesterton (1874–1936)

There fared a mother driven forth
Out of an inn to roam;
In the place where she was homeless
All men are at home.
The crazy stable close at hand,
With shaking timber and shifting sand,
Grew a stronger thing to abide and stand
Than the square stones of Rome.
For men are homesick in their homes,
And strangers under the sun,
And they lay on their heads in a foreign land
Whenever the day is done...
A Child in a foul stable,
Where the beasts feed and foam;
Only where He was homeless
Are you and I at home;
We have hands that fashion and heads
that know,
But our hearts we lost - how long ago!
In a place no chart nor ship can show
Under the sky's dome...
To an open house in the evening
Home shall men come,
To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome.
To the end of the way of the wandering
star,
To the things that cannot be and that are,
To the place where God was homeless
And all men are at home.



REACT:

(1) Reflect on the different names given for God i.e. 'Wonderful Counsellor', 'Mighty God', 'Everlasting Father', 'Prince of Peace', 'Bright Morning Star'. How do you experience God's love through these different characteristics of who He is?.....

(2) Read Chesterton's poem. Reflect on the 'homesickness' he describes, the longing in people for home even when they are in their homes. Where do you feel homesick? Where do you see 'homesickness' in the world around you?

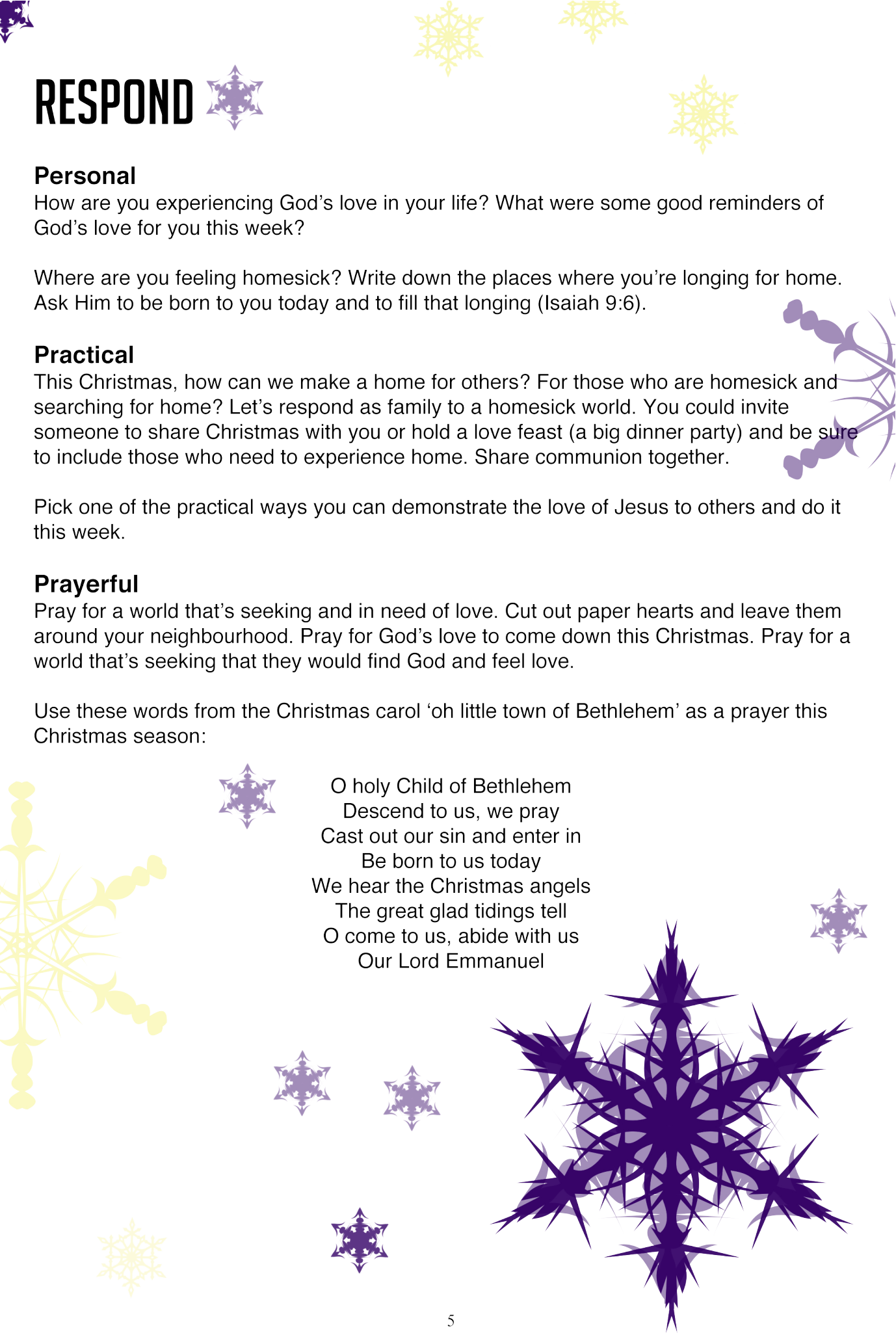
Jesus was born homeless, ('there was no room for them at the inn' - Luke 2:7) so that we could have a home. What does this act of love mean to us and to a homesick world?.....

(3) Who do you find it difficult to love? how can you demonstrate the love of Jesus to them this Christmas?.....

(4) Think of the people around you, those you work or go to school with, your peers, colleagues. What does 'living in love' look like? How can you more humbly love the people around you in practical ways? (1 John 4:14-16).....

(5) Reflect on Christina Georgina Rossetti's poem 'Love came down at Christmas' and read 1 John 4:14-16. Reflect upon what it means that the Father has sent His Son to be 'the Savior of the world'. Think about the world around you that needs a Savior. Think of the places where people are seeking? What does it mean that love came down at Christmas? How can we be gifts of love to others this Christmas?.....

RESPOND



Personal

How are you experiencing God's love in your life? What were some good reminders of God's love for you this week?

Where are you feeling homesick? Write down the places where you're longing for home. Ask Him to be born to you today and to fill that longing (Isaiah 9:6).

Practical

This Christmas, how can we make a home for others? For those who are homesick and searching for home? Let's respond as family to a homesick world. You could invite someone to share Christmas with you or hold a love feast (a big dinner party) and be sure to include those who need to experience home. Share communion together.

Pick one of the practical ways you can demonstrate the love of Jesus to others and do it this week.

Prayerful

Pray for a world that's seeking and in need of love. Cut out paper hearts and leave them around your neighbourhood. Pray for God's love to come down this Christmas. Pray for a world that's seeking that they would find God and feel love.

Use these words from the Christmas carol 'oh little town of Bethlehem' as a prayer this Christmas season:



O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel



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Thank you for joining with us in prayer during the Advent season. We hope your Christmas is filled with Peace, Hope, Joy and Love.

24-7 Spaces will be back again in Lent 2012.

