

*Isa. 64:1–9*

*Ps. 80:1–7, 17–19*

**1 Cor. 1:3–9**

*Mark 13:24–37*

# A Loving Greeting

**Goal for  
the Session**

*Children will rejoice in Paul’s word to the Corinthians as they prepare to welcome Christ.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on 1 Corinthians 1:3–9

#### **WHAT is important to know?**

— From “*Exegetical Perspective*,” E. Elizabeth Johnson

The letter’s thanksgiving (1:4–9) telegraphs to readers at the outset the basic concerns of the writer. In this case, Paul’s concerns are several related issues pertaining to the welfare of the house churches in Corinth: their charismatic giftedness (vv. 4, 7), their wealth—particularly but not only in terms of speech and knowledge (v. 5), the revelation of Christ in glory on the Day of the Lord (vv. 7, 8), and the faithfulness of the God who has called them (v. 9). Each of these subjects recurs throughout 1 Corinthians.

#### **WHERE is God in these words?**

— From “*Theological Perspective*,” Carlos F. Cardoza-Orandi

This text points to one of the unique characteristics of the Christian religion: the intimate relationship between God and the Christian community that God bestows in and through Jesus Christ. Christianity gives witness to an intimate relationship among God, creation, and, in particular, the Christian community. This relationship is contextual: in other words, it takes its life and its shape from the particular terms of people’s cultures. Hence, Jesus is our brother, our Lord, our ancestor, our beloved one, our enlightened spirit. Paul reasserts that the Christian community will be sustained in this spiritual continuum for one crucial reason: “God is faithful” (v. 9).

#### **SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?**

— From “*Pastoral Perspective*,” Martin B. Copenhaver

Paul proceeds to bless the Corinthian congregation. He has some urgent matters to take up with them, but those can wait for a time. Instead, Paul begins by offering a gift of blessing. It is an offering that, in itself, reminds his readers of the bonds they share. This passage invites us to offer thanks to God, not for material gifts, but for spiritual gifts found in the church. It might also serve as a reminder that the gathered body, the body of Christ, is itself intended to be a feast of abundance laid out for the sake of the world.

#### **NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?**

— From “*Homiletical Perspective*,” Charles L. Campbell

The grace of Jesus Christ, which is the source of the community’s faith and life, undercuts all divisions in the community based on human accomplishments or status. Grace here has radical social implications; it is not simply a word spoken to individuals or a power at work in individuals. Grace creates a new kind of community. Paul invites the Corinthian church—and the contemporary church—to become an odd, new people in the context of a culture divided between superior and inferior, honored and shamed, insider and outsider. The grace of Jesus Christ is the source of that new kind of community.

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**  
*1 Corinthians 1:3–9*

## Focus on Your Teaching

Children know from experience how important kind words and encouragement are. Paul's words to the Corinthians are also an encouraging way to begin the season of Advent. This is a season that many children will know. Anytime the children recognize that they have experience and information that is important to the church, they realize that they are part of the church. Therefore, this session includes both the kind words from Paul and the first Sunday of Advent.

*Encouraging God, I pray that my words to the children will encourage them to prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

### YOU WILL NEED

- 4 votive candleholders
- purple or blue cloth
- offering basket
- Bible
- Singing the Feast*,  
[bit.ly/SingingTheFeast](http://bit.ly/SingingTheFeast)
- Color Pack 1, 2, 3, 37
- orange paper
- scissors
- Resource Sheet 1

### For Responding

- option 1: foam ball or other small soft object
- option 2: Bibles, pencils, copies of Resource Sheet 2
- option 3: copies of Resource Sheet 3, materials listed there
- option 4: Color Pack 37; *Singing the Feast*,  
[bit.ly/SingingTheFeast](http://bit.ly/SingingTheFeast)

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

*In advance*, cut orange paper into narrow strips, about 3" x ¼", five per person. Print the sentence, "Loving God, hear our prayers." on a slip of paper for a child to read during Gathering Advent ritual. If you are using option 3 in Responding, gather materials listed on Resource Sheet 3 (Make an Advent Wreath).

As you greet the children, welcome each one and ask about how they used their hands to help others this week. When you are ready to begin, have the group help you arrange the purple or blue cloth on the worship table. (Use the color your congregation uses in worship during Advent.) Place Color Pack 1 on the table, along with an offering basket and the Bible open to 1 Corinthians. Place votive candleholders on Color Pack 1, matching them with the candles on the wreath.

Have the children sit down. Ask:

- ✠ What do you remember about Advent, the weeks before Christmas?
- ✠ How do you celebrate Advent in your home?

As needed, offer the following information: Advent begins the church year. It includes the four Sundays before Christmas Day. During Advent, we wait and prepare for the coming of Jesus. The color is purple or blue, royal colors. Invite a child to point to this season on Color Pack 2. Suggest that the children look around the church building for signs of Advent today.

Lead the children in this Advent prayer, which will be used each Sunday during Advent.

**Leader:** Holy God, be with us as we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ. And everyone says, "Loving God, hear our prayers."  
*(Pause for the children to repeat the response.)*

**Child:** On this first Sunday we light the candle of hope and thank God for that gift.



# FEASTING on the WORD

## CURRICULUM

### A Loving Greeting

For safety reasons, many churches do not allow lighted candles in classrooms. The Advent ritual takes this into account.

**Leader:** You may put an orange paper strip in one candleholder when you thank God for something in your life. (*Model what you mean by saying, "Thank you, God, for . . .," and placing a strip in one votive candleholder.*) When everyone who wishes to thank God has done so, conclude the prayer with:

**Leader:** Shine your light on us, God, and help us see your Son, Jesus, in new ways. Amen.

To prepare the children to hear the opening of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, ask:

- ✧ What kind words did someone say to you this week?
- ✧ What kind words did you say to someone else this week?

Comment that the Bible story for today includes kind words for the people of a church long ago.

## EXPLORING

Ask:

- ✧ What do you remember about Paul, who began many new churches long, long ago?

Help the children recall that Paul taught many people about Jesus. Explain that the letter they will hear today was to the church in Corinth. Show them where this letter is found in the New Testament of the Bible. If your Bible has a map of Paul's journeys, point out Corinth.

Assign a child to hold up Color Pack 3 when you signal. Read Resource Sheet 1 (Paul's Kind Words). Ask:

- ✧ What kind words did you hear in this letter?
- ✧ How does it help people to hear kind words from others?
- ✧ How can you give kind words to others?

Allow a wide range of possibilities for answers to the last question above. The options in Responding range from memorizing Paul's words to making an Advent wreath so they can hear kind words with their families during Advent.

## RESPONDING

Offer at least two options so children have a choice. One might be more challenging to interest older children who can work on their own.

1. **Game** This "Pass the Grace" game will help the children remember these words of blessing adapted from 1 Corinthians 1:3: "Grace to you and peace from God." Stand in a circle. Say, "Grace to you, (*Name*)," and toss a foam ball or other light object to someone in the circle. That person responds, "And peace from God." The person with the ball does the same thing, tossing the ball to someone else. Play until each one has had several turns. Conclude by saying the whole verse in unison. Ask:

- ✧ To whom might you say these kind words?

EASY  
PREP

You may wish to send the Advent wreath activities home whether or not the children make Advent wreaths.

### God, We Sing

God, we sing with praise  
to you,  
Light the flame of *hope*  
anew;  
Light this candle, light the  
way,  
Bring *hope* into our hearts  
today.  
Jesus, near us as we pray,  
Let *hope* be in our hearts  
today.

Encourage them to think of people at home, at school, and wherever they go during the week.

- 2. Blessings** Paul's kind words are also known as a blessing. To help older children think about the meaning of blessing, provide copies of Resource Sheet 2 (A Blessing), Bibles, and pencils. Have the children work through the resource sheet and prepare a blessing to be used in Closing.
- 3. Advent Wreath** While some families may have an Advent wreath, the children can make their own. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 3 (Make an Advent Wreath) and help children to follow the directions. After wreaths are made, talk about how they can be used at home, pointing out the directions. Supply grocery sacks for the children to take home wreaths, copies of Resource Sheet 3, and the envelope with strips.
- 4. Song** The song "God, We Sing" (Color Pack 37, [Singing the Feast](#)) will be used throughout Advent in Closing. Teach it to the children so they are ready to sing the first stanza in Closing for this session. The children can first hum to the music and begin to add words as they come to know the melody.

### CLOSING

Gather at the worship table, around the Advent wreath. Remind the group that this is the first Sunday of Advent, the season when we get ready for Christmas, the birth of Jesus.

Sing the first stanza of "God, We Sing" (Color Pack 37, [Singing the Feast](#)).

If some children prepared a blessing, have them read it to the group now. If they did not, send this benediction around the circle, "May you find God's hope in your life this week."

As you say good-bye to each child, encourage the children to return for the next session. Be sure they have their Advent wreaths or anything you have for them to take home.

## Paul's Kind Words

(Based on 1 Corinthians 1:3-9)

Corinth is a large city in Greece. When Paul went there, he worked as a tentmaker to pay for his room and food. (Show Color Pack 3.) Paul wrote more than one letter to this new church. Two of them are in the Bible. This is how one of them begins, with kind words to the people in the church in Corinth.

A letter from Paul, an apostle of Jesus the Christ,  
chosen by God.

To the people in the church in Corinth and to any  
others who believe in Christ who read this letter.

I pray that God and Jesus the Christ will give you  
peace and grace.

I thank God for you all the time, that God gave you  
grace in Jesus the Christ. Jesus helps you to speak  
and know so much about God. The way you speak  
about Jesus shows that you know the truth.

From the way you speak and know Jesus it is clear  
that God has given you everything you need until  
Jesus comes again.

God keeps promises and it is God who has called you  
to believe in Christ Jesus. That means that you will  
be faithful to the end.

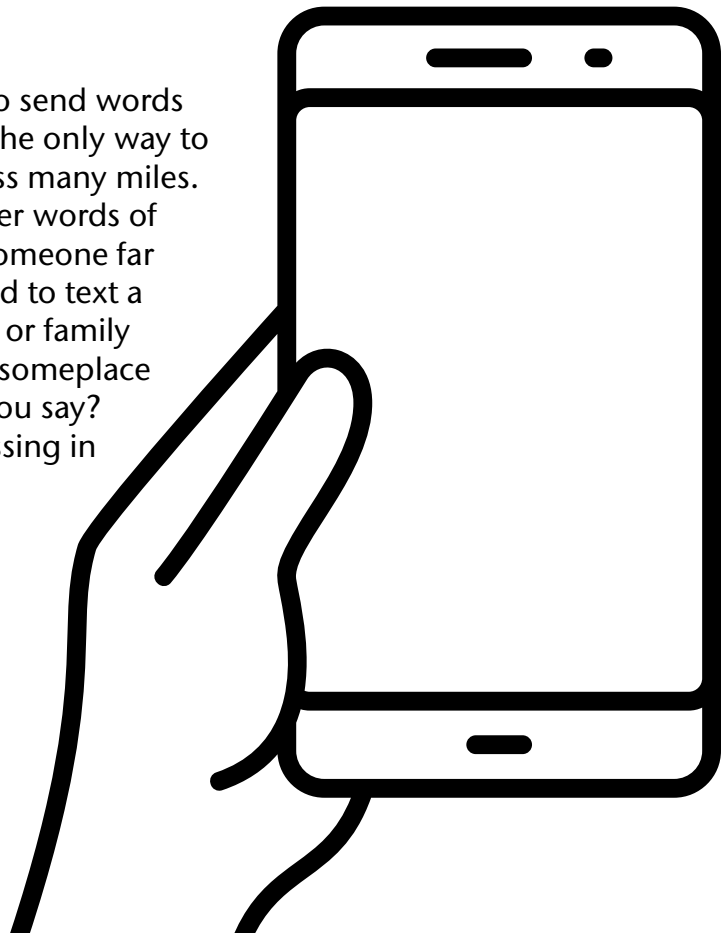
## A Blessing

In the Bible, a person is considered blessed when receiving God's gifts and God's approval. Sometimes these blessings can be seen: food to eat, a place to live, a family. Other times, blessings refer to things that cannot be seen or measured: knowing deep in your heart that God loves you no matter what.

In the whole Bible, you find stories where people speak words of God's blessing to others. Look up Numbers 6:22–27. It is in the Old Testament. Read God's instructions for a blessing to use as part of worship. Have you ever heard this blessing?

When we speak words of blessing to others, we are telling them how much we want them to know and feel God's blessings. Find 1 Corinthians 1:3–9, the verses you heard earlier. This time you will read them as recorded in your Bible. Where do you read words of blessing there? Write them here. If you get stuck, find a hint at the bottom of the page.

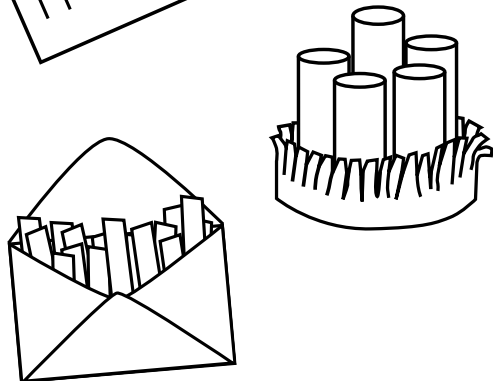
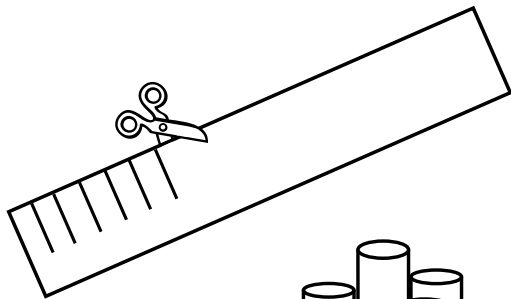
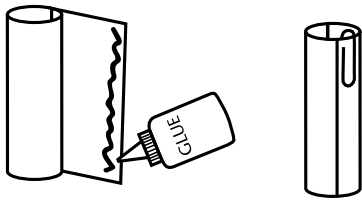
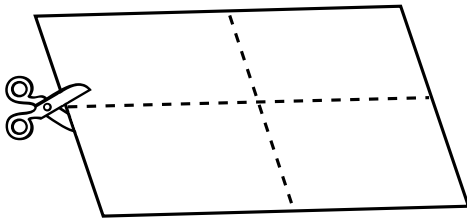
Paul wrote letters to send words of blessing. It was the only way to communicate across many miles. How might you offer words of blessing today to someone far away? If you wanted to text a blessing to a friend or family member who lives someplace else, what would you say? Write your text blessing in the screen.



**Hint:** Many blessings start with the word *may*.

**You will need:**

- ❑ purple or blue, orange, dark green, and white construction paper
- ❑ scissors
- ❑ glue or glue stick
- ❑ paper clip, envelope
- ❑ grocery sack

**Make an Advent Wreath**

1. **Make the four candles for the four Sundays in Advent.** Use a 9" x 12" sheet of purple or dark blue construction paper, according to the color your church uses in worship. Cut the paper into quarters. Roll each piece, starting at the short end, to make 4½-inch tall candles, about 1 inch in diameter. Glue the edge of each roll and use a paper clip to hold it in place until glue dries.
2. **Make one Christ candle for the center of the wreath.** Trim a 9" x 12" piece of white construction paper to 9" x 10". Cut it into quarters. Roll one piece, starting at the long end, to make a 5-inch tall candle. Glue the edge and use a paper clip to hold it in place until the glue dries.
3. **Make the wreath.** Cut a 2" x 12" piece of dark green construction paper. Cut about halfway into the strip along the long edge to make "fringe." Glue the strip into a ring around the five candles. Hold it closed with a paper clip until dry, then fold the fringes out like foliage.
4. **Cut strips for the flames.** From orange construction paper, cut about 40 thin strips that are 6 inches long. Keep strips in an envelope for use during Advent.
5. **Take home your wreath,** envelope with strips, and this sheet. Invite your family to join you in the activities described in the box.

On the **first Sunday of Advent**, give thanks to God for something in your life, and place orange strips in one purple or blue candle.

On the **second Sunday of Advent**, tell ways you are getting ready for Christmas, and place orange strips in another candle.

On the **third Sunday of Advent**, name persons or places in need of God's love, and place orange strips in a third candle.

On the **fourth Sunday of Advent**, tell about something kind you did for another person this week, and place orange strips in the fourth candle.

*Isa. 64:1–9*

*Ps. 80:1–7, 17–19*

**1 Cor. 1:3–9**

*Mark 13:24–37*

# In and through Grace

**Goal for the Session**

*Anticipating God’s return, adults will seek ways to encourage others and find strength for themselves through the church.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on 1 Corinthians 1:3–9

#### **WHAT is important to know?**

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” E. Elizabeth Johnson

The letter’s thanksgiving (1:4–9) telegraphs to readers at the outset the basic concerns of the writer. In this case, Paul’s concerns are several related issues pertaining to the welfare of the house churches in Corinth: their charismatic giftedness (vv. 4, 7), their wealth—particularly but not only in terms of speech and knowledge (v. 5), the revelation of Christ in glory on the Day of the Lord (vv. 7, 8), and the faithfulness of the God who has called them (v. 9). Each of these subjects recurs throughout 1 Corinthians.

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Paul proceeds to bless the Corinthian congregation. He has some urgent matters to take up with them, but those can wait for a time. Instead, Paul begins by offering a gift of blessing. It is an offering that, in itself, reminds his readers of the bonds they share. This passage invites us to offer thanks to God, not for material gifts, but for spiritual gifts found in the church. It might also serve as a reminder that the gathered body, the body of Christ, is itself intended to be a feast of abundance laid out for the sake of the world.

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**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**  
*1 Corinthians 1:3–9*

## Focus on Your Teaching

The seasons of Advent and Christmas cause anxiety among many Christians who have unrealistic expectations for the season. Others may be facing a holiday without a family member or dear friend. However, Advent can be a time to slow down and anticipate God coming to earth. The text for the First Sunday of Advent is Paul's opening blessing and thanksgiving to the church at Corinth. That early Christian community, like Bethlehem where Jesus was born and perhaps our own, was filled with conflict. Offering a word of hope and affirmation can put lives in perspective.

*God of grace and peace, may your light shine through me as I lead this group in the study of your holy Word. Amen.*

### YOU WILL NEED

- Bibles
- Advent wreath with four purple or blue candles
- matches
- pens and paper
- board or newsprint
- markers
- copies of Resource Sheets 1, 2
- copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session

### For Responding

- option 1: writing paper, pens
- option 2: guest with knowledge of congregation's history
- option 3: copies of Resource Sheet 1

The Revised Common Lectionary has a three-year cycle. Each year begins on the First Sunday of Advent and highlights one of the first three Gospels. Today begins a new year with the focus on the Gospel of Mark.

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

*Before the session*, arrange the Advent wreath and candles in the center of your learning space. If possible, use the same color of candles that your church uses in Advent worship.

Greet participants as they arrive and introduce any newcomers to at least one regular participant. Ask that person to orient the newcomer on how the group functions. Invite participants to call out the things they need to do to prepare for Christmas. When someone mentions Advent devotions or something similar, recall that, for Christians, the time leading to Christmas is Advent, a time of waiting and preparation of the way of the Lord. Ask:

✠ What spiritual practices help you get ready for Christmas?

If your congregation provides any Advent resources, tell the group about them or have the resources available for them. Direct the group's attention to the Advent wreath and light one candle. Pray this prayer or one of your choosing:

*O God, you are the light of the world. Today we light the candle of hope.  
May hope light the path we walk until you come again. Amen.*

### EXPLORING

Remind participants that this is a Bible study based on the readings used in worship each week, called the Revised Common Lectionary. Many denominations around the world use these same texts, which are based on a three-year cycle. Each cycle begins with the First Sunday of Advent. Before beginning this new year, which focuses on the Gospel of Mark, review some of the themes and main ideas from Matthew.

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (Important Lessons from Matthew) and pens and paper. Work in groups of two to four persons. Suggest that participants allow some time for personal reflection on the final questions on the sheet.

Periodically taking time to review recent lessons helps everyone make connections and draw general directions from the focus scriptures for living faithfully.

Option: After a few minutes, gather as a group and ask adults who participated in the fall session to tell briefly about one behavior they have changed or begun as a result of the study.

Ask adults to turn to 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 in their Bibles and read it silently. Make two columns on board or newsprint: God and Corinthian Church. Ask:

✿ What did you learn about God from this text? What did you discover about the church in Corinth from this text?

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 (Focus on 1 Corinthians 1:3–9). Allow a few minutes for everyone to read it. Invite them to add other information about God and the Corinthian church to the newsprint.

Explain that all of Paul’s letters in the Bible that are addressed to Christian communities seem to be for communities that are embroiled in controversy and division. Ask:

✿ What do we know or surmise about the conflicts in Corinth from Paul’s greetings to them?

Direct their attention to the “So What?” excerpt. Invite someone to read it aloud. Then read aloud this excerpt from the longer essay by the same writer:

[Paul] knows that he has difficult issues to take up with the Corinthians, so he chooses to begin by reminding them of the basis of their being together in the first place—because they are called by Jesus Christ and enlivened by the presence of the Holy Spirit. He sets their sights on higher places so that they might begin to stop wallowing in the petty particulars of their present circumstances. Paul is reminding them of the very height and depth and breadth of their call . . .

—Excerpted from Martin B. Copenhaver, *Feasting on the Word, Year B, Volume 1* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 16.

Ask the following questions:

- ✿ What reactions might the Corinthian church have had to Paul’s blessing and thanksgiving?
- ✿ How might these words have encouraged them and given them strength?

These questions will prepare the group for the Responding options.

Extinguish the candle.

## RESPONDING

Choose one or more of these activities, depending on the length of your session:

1. **Write a Letter** Distribute paper and pens. Invite participants to spend a few moments thinking about a Christian community they know of that is in conflict. Have them list some of the issues of the conflict. Remind them that while individuals may commit the offenses, they are to name the issues and not individuals. Then have them list some of the gifts that community has to be thankful for. Now they are to spend a few minutes writing an opening paragraph to the community that does not address the issues, but rather gives thanks for their particular gifts.

EASY  
PREP

After a few minutes, invite a few volunteers to read their paragraphs aloud to the entire group. Ask the group members to name where they hear grace in the paragraph.

- 2. Your Church Community** Invite the pastor or someone knowledgeable about the history of your congregation to talk with your group about how the church got started and about some of the early conflicts. Talk with the person(s) about the lesson. Ask him or her to refrain from using names and individual personalities but rather, like Paul, lift up the issues and how they were resolved.

After the presentation, invite participants to name, again without using people's names, some issues in your church that need to be addressed. Then ask:

- ✪ How might Paul write the opening portion of a letter to our congregation today?
- ✪ What would he be thankful for?

- 3. An Odd Community** Have participants read the “Now What?” excerpt on Resource Sheet 1. Form groups of two or three to discuss these questions:
  - ✪ How does our community break down social divisions between members?
  - ✪ In what ways would an outsider find our community odd in the way Paul encourages?

Reunite and invite groups to compare their answers.

## CLOSING

Gather around the Advent wreath and light one candle, if necessary. Read aloud:

Grace creates a new kind of community—one in which the divisions and hierarchies of the world no longer function because the grace of Jesus Christ, not human accomplishment or status, is the source of the community's life. There is no room here for superior and inferior, because all gifts have the same source and are consequently equally valued.

—Excerpted from Charles L. Campbell, *Feasting on the Word, Year B, Volume 1* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 19.

Invite the participants to think about one way they can contribute to this new kind of community, encouraging others and finding strength for themselves.

Close with this prayer or one of your choosing:

*God of hope, thank you for encouragement and vision for us to be the community you know we can be. We will imitate your way of grace this week and always, breaking barriers and hierarchies of the world that should not be. Amen.*

Extinguish the candle. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session, or e-mail it to learners during the week. Encourage them to read the focus scripture and the resource sheet before the next session.

## Focus on 1 Corinthians 1:3–9

### **WHAT is important to know?** — From “Exegetical Perspective,” E. Elizabeth Johnson

The letter’s thanksgiving (1:4–9) telegraphs to readers at the outset the basic concerns of the writer. In this case, Paul’s concerns are several related issues pertaining to the welfare of the house churches in Corinth: their charismatic giftedness (vv. 4, 7), their wealth—particularly but not only in terms of speech and knowledge (v. 5), the revelation of Christ in glory on the Day of the Lord (vv. 7, 8), and the faithfulness of the God who has called them (v. 9). Each of these subjects recurs throughout 1 Corinthians.

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Paul proceeds to bless the Corinthian congregation. He has some urgent matters to take up with them, but those can wait for a time. Instead, Paul begins by offering a gift of blessing. It is an offering that, in itself, reminds his readers of the bonds they share. This passage invites us to offer thanks to God, not for material gifts, but for spiritual gifts found in the church. It might also serve as a reminder that the gathered body, the body of Christ, is itself intended to be a feast of abundance laid out for the sake of the world.

### **NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?** — From “Homiletical Perspective,” Charles L. Campbell

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## Important Lessons from Matthew

On eleven of the past twelve weeks important texts from Matthew were the focus. Recall the texts from the chart below. Add your notes about what you remember. Add helpful comments by group members during the discussion later.

<b>Text</b>	<b>Major Lesson</b>	<b>Your Comments</b>
Matthew 18:15–20	What to do when someone offends you	
Matthew 18:21–35	Forgiving is not an option for Christians.	
Matthew 20:1–16	God loves all equally.	
Matthew 21:23–32	Qualities of a good religious leader	
Matthew 21:33–46	God uses people who bear fruit.	
Matthew 22:1–14	All are invited to the banquet, but wear the right clothes!	
Matthew 22:34–46	The greatest commandments	
Matthew 23:1–12	The greatest among you will be your servant.	
Matthew 25:1–13	Ten bridesmaids, keep oil in your lamp.	
Matthew 25:14–30	Use your gifts and be willing to risk.	
Matthew 25:31–46	Serve the least of these and you serve Jesus.	

### Personal Reflection Questions

1. Which two lessons are most important to you now?
2. What are one or two acts of discipleship that you have implemented since studying these passages?

# *Joining the Feast*

Year B, Winter  
First Sunday of Advent—  
Transfiguration Sunday



# What you will find in *Joining the Feast!*

## The Church Year Calendar

Describes the important church festivals and special days for the coming season. It provides theological reflections on their importance for the church's life and our own lives.

## The Shape of the Season

Presents an overview of the focus scriptures for the weeks in the coming season. It discusses the biblical and theological significance of each of the passages.

## Joining Worship and Learning: Making the Connections and Time with Children

A helpful feature in this section of *Joining the Feast* is the inclusion of the stories on the focus scriptures from the multi-age course. These stories can be used in the children's time during worship. Notice that some songs are used by several age levels but not in the same session. If you are interested in including a prayer, poetry, or artwork from an age level, speak with the leader in advance. May your congregational worship be enlivened by these suggestions to join worship and learning.

## Joining Mission and Learning

Help the participants in the *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* connect with existing service opportunities in your congregation. Review this list, and offer suggestions to the leaders. Give this chart to the chair of the mission or outreach committee so that the work of the committee can be strengthened through the church school.

## Litanies and Prayers

A selection of poetic prayers and responsive readings that helps worship leaders connect the church's educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God.

## Children's Bulletins

A fun activity page is provided weekly to give children a sense of belonging and help them feel welcome in the worship experience. These special children's bulletins connect their worship experience to the education themes.

## Joining the Feast

We invite you to “Join the Feast”!

Our exciting *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* offers great opportunities for the local church. Pastors, educators, and participants can experience the wonder of God’s nourishing word to us. For church schools, for study groups, and in preparation for teaching and preaching, the resources here will deepen and strengthen our faith. We have an amazing “feast” set before us! We desire and can find further understanding in our faith—of who God is and what God has done!

*Joining the Feast* helps pastors, educators, and worship leaders plan for education and worship. We want to assist in reflecting on how to incorporate scriptural and seasonal emphases across different parts of the church’s life.

*Joining the Feast* can be shared in education and worship committees. It enables important biblical themes to be integrated into the church’s study and worship experiences. A chart of suggestions for ways educational emphases can be used in worship is a feature of what follows here. Church school teachers can discuss these materials with each other to enhance education for all age levels in the church. Pastors who plan their lectionary preaching will find taking an overall look at this church season to be useful for their preparations. In all this we want to join teaching and preaching. We want the church’s educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God!

An important goal for pastors and educators in the church is to connect or join the church’s educational experience with the church’s worship experience. People of all ages who participate in church school study can find their Christian faith enhanced when the Scriptures read and proclaimed in worship reinforce and expand what they have been considering in their educational time. Education and worship can be mutually supportive in helping God’s word in Scripture come alive in the Sunday morning experience. Consideration of the same lectionary reading in preaching can deepen the insights gained in church school.

Pastors who want to build on what has been done in education welcome this *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* as a way to prepare congregational members for directions into which the sermon can lead. Those who participate in the education time will find the insights gained there enhanced by preaching which considers the same passage and brings God’s word to bear in fresh and nourishing ways. So as we “Join the Feast,” joining the church’s educational and worship dimensions can bring to life the richness of God’s word in Scripture.

Donald K. McKim



# CHILDREN'S BULLETIN

Advent 1

## Paul's Kind Words

based on 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Paul went to the city of Corinth to teach about Jesus. He helped the people there start a church. After Paul moved on, he wrote letters to the Christians in the church in Corinth. This is how one of the letters begins:

*To: The people in the church in Corinth and any others who believe in Christ.*

*From: Paul, a messenger for Jesus the Christ, God's chosen Savior.*

*I pray that God and Jesus the Christ will give you peace and grace. I thank God for you all the time. I give thanks that Jesus helps you to know God. The way you speak about Jesus shows that you know the truth about God's love.*

*It is clear that God has given you everything you need until Jesus comes again. God keeps promises! It is God who has called you to believe in Christ and will help you to believe in Jesus' ways forever.*

Decode the rebus to write one of the things Paul wrote to the church in Corinth.



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Color the items that would be helpful in building a church today. Draw an X over all of the other images.

