Diocese of Athabasca

Sunday School Lesson Plan

Here's a **Sunday School Lesson Plan** for **young children (ages 4–8)** and some activities for older children using the **Revised Common Lectionary readings** for the **Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost (Year A).** Bible Verses: Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30; Preface of the Lord's Day

✨ Sunday School Lesson Plan

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – Year A

USE YOUR GIFTS FOR GOD!

Theme: God Gives Us Gifts to Share

Big Idea: God has given each of us special gifts and abilities. We can use what God has given us to help others, show kindness, and share God's love.

Revised Common Lectionary — Year A

- Judges 4:1–7
- Psalm 123
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11
- Matthew 25:14–30

Preface: The Lord's Day

Liturgical Colour: Green

Age Group: Preschool to Young Elementary (approximately 3–9 years)

Suggested Lesson Length: 30–45 minutes, with additional activities as desired.
Lectionary note: The readings supplied are the complementary readings for Proper 28 in Year A. They are suitable for this lesson.

1. Lesson Title / Theme / Big Idea

USE YOUR GIFTS FOR GOD!

Theme: God Gives Us Gifts to Share

Big Idea: Everything we have comes from God. God wants us to use our abilities, time, kindness, and resources wisely and lovingly.

Lesson Focus for Kids:

- God has given each of us gifts.
- Everyone has something special to offer.
- Our gifts and abilities may be different.
- We can use our gifts to help others.
- God wants us to be brave and faithful.
- We can encourage one another.
- Jesus teaches us to use what God has entrusted to us rather than hide it away.
- We can show God's love through everyday actions.

This Week's Message

❤️ GOD GIVES ME GIFTS TO SHARE! ❤️

God has given each of us something special, and we can use our gifts to make the world a kinder and more loving place.

2. Scripture Readings — Kid-Friendly Language

Judges 4:1–7 — Deborah Listens to God

Long ago, God's people were having a difficult time.
They were frightened because a powerful army was troubling them.
There was a wise woman named Deborah.
Deborah was a judge and leader of God's people.
She loved God and listened carefully to God's guidance.
People came to Deborah when they needed help making decisions.
One day Deborah called for a man named Barak.
She told him that God wanted him to gather an army and help God's people.
God had promised to help them.
Deborah was brave.
She used her wisdom and leadership to serve God and help others.

Kid Connection

God gave Deborah the gifts of wisdom, courage, and leadership.

We all have different gifts.
Some people are good at helping.
Some are good at listening.
Some are good at encouraging others.
Some are good at making things.
Some are good at solving problems.
GOD CAN USE ALL OUR GIFTS!

Psalm 123 — We Look to God for Help

The writer of this psalm looked toward God.
He trusted God to hear his prayers.
The psalm reminds us that God is our helper.
When life is difficult, we can turn to God.
When we are worried, we can pray.
When we need guidance, we can ask God to help us.

Kid Connection

Sometimes we need help.
We might need help learning something new.
We might need help when we are afraid.
We might need help making a good choice.
God wants us to trust him.
I CAN ASK GOD FOR HELP!

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11 — Encourage One Another

Paul wrote a letter to Christians who were learning to follow Jesus.
He reminded them that they belonged to God.
He encouraged them to live in the light of Jesus.
Paul said that Christians should have faith, love, and hope.
He also told them to encourage and build up one another.
Paul wrote:
"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other." — 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Kid Connection

We can encourage someone by saying:
"You can do it!"
"Thank you for helping!"
"Would you like to play with me?"
"I'm glad you're my friend!"
"Let me help you!"
Kind words can make someone feel loved.
I CAN ENCOURAGE OTHERS!

Matthew 25:14–30 — The Parable of the Talents

Jesus told a story about a man who was going away on a journey.
Before leaving, he called three servants.
He trusted them with his money.
To the first servant, he gave five talents.
To the second servant, he gave two talents.
To the third servant, he gave one talent.
In Jesus' time, a talent was a very large amount of money.
The first servant put his money to work and gained five more talents.
The second servant also put his money to work and gained two more talents.
But the third servant was afraid.
He dug a hole and buried the money.
He did not use it.
When the master returned, he asked the servants what they had done.
The first servant showed him ten talents.
The master was pleased.
The second servant showed him four talents.
The master was pleased with him too.
Both had been faithful with what they were given.
But the third servant returned only the one talent he had buried.
He explained that he had been afraid.
The master was unhappy because the servant had done nothing with the money entrusted to him.
Jesus used this story to teach his followers about being faithful and responsible with what they are given.

Kid Connection

In the Bible story, talents were money.
Today we also use the word talents to describe things we are good at doing.
We can remember that God gives us abilities and opportunities to use wisely.
We can use our gifts to help others.
GOD WANTS US TO USE OUR GIFTS!

3. Welcome & Opening Prayer / Circle Time

Activity: What's in the Gift Box?

Materials: A small gift box containing simple objects such as a crayon, heart, toy, book, bandage, and musical instrument picture. Gather the children in a circle. Show them the gift box.
Ask:

"What do you think is inside?"

Let the children guess.

Open the box and take out one object at a time.
Explain what each object might represent.

Object	Gift or Ability
Crayon	Creativity
Heart	Love
Book	Learning and teaching
Bandage	Caring for others
Musical note	Music and praise
Toy	Sharing
Helping hands picture	Service

Explain:
"God has given each of us different gifts. Some are things we can do. Some are ways we can help. Some are things we can share."
"God wants us to use our gifts to show love."

Ask:
"What is something you enjoy doing?"
"How could you use that gift to help someone?"

Opening Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for loving us.
Thank you for the wonderful gifts you give us.
Thank you for our families, our friends, and our church.
Help us discover the gifts you have given us.
Help us be brave like Deborah.
Help us encourage one another.
Teach us to use our gifts to help others and share your love.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

4. Memory Verse

"Encourage one another and build up each other."

1 Thessalonians 5:11

For younger children:

"ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER!"

Memory Verse Actions

Words	Actions
ENCOURAGE	Give two thumbs up
ONE	Point to a friend
ANOTHER	Point to another friend

BUILD UP	Raise both hands upward
EACH OTHER	Stretch arms toward everyone

Repeat the verse several times.
Have the children say it quietly, loudly, slowly, and with actions.
Finish by saying:
"I CAN USE KIND WORDS TO HELP OTHERS!"

5. Bible Story Time

The Three Servants and Their Talents

One day Jesus was teaching his friends. He wanted them to understand how important it is to use what God gives us. So Jesus told them a story.

There was once a man who was going away on a long journey. Before he left, he called three servants. "I am going away," he told them. "I am trusting you to look after some of my money."

He gave the first servant five talents. (Hold up five large pretend coins.)

He gave the second servant two talents. (Hold up two pretend coins.)

And he gave the third servant one talent. (Hold up one pretend coin.)

Then the master went away.

The first servant thought: "I will put this money to work!" He worked carefully and gained five more talents. Now he had ten!

The second servant also put his money to work. He gained two more talents. Now he had four!

But the third servant was afraid. "What if I lose the money?" he worried. So he dug a hole in the ground. He buried the talent and hid it away. Then he waited.

After a long time, the master returned. He called his servants together. "What have you done with the money I gave you?" he asked.

The first servant came forward. "You gave me five talents," he said. "Look! I have gained five more!" The master was very pleased. "Well done, good and trustworthy servant!"

Then the second servant came forward. "You gave me two talents," he said. "Look! I have gained two more!" The master was pleased with him too. "Well done, good and trustworthy servant!"

Then the third servant came forward. He held out the one talent. "I was afraid," he explained. "So I buried your money in the ground." The master was disappointed. The servant had hidden what he had been given instead of using it responsibly.

Jesus wanted his friends to understand that what we are given matters. We should use what is entrusted to us faithfully.

What Does This Mean for Us?

We may not have bags of gold coins! But God has given us wonderful gifts. Maybe you are good at drawing. Maybe you are good at singing. Maybe you are good at listening. Maybe you are good at helping. Maybe you are good at making people smile. Maybe you are good at sharing. We can use these gifts to help others. And when we try something new, we can ask God

to help us be brave. We do not have to be the best at everything. We do not have to have the same gifts as someone else. God wants us to use what we have with love and faithfulness.

❤️ I CAN USE MY GIFTS FOR GOD! ❤️

6. Craft / Activity

Craft 1 — My Gifts from God

Materials: Large paper gift box template, crayons, markers, glue, scissors, and heart stickers.
Give each child a large outline of a gift box.
Across the top write:
GOD GIVES ME GIFTS!
Inside the gift box, children draw things they enjoy doing or ways they can help others.
Examples:

- Drawing pictures.
- Singing.
- Helping at home.
- Sharing toys.
- Reading.
- Caring for animals.
- Comforting someone.
- Making friends.

At the bottom write:
I CAN USE MY GIFTS TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE!

Craft 2 — My Helping Hands

Materials: Paper, pencils, crayons, and scissors.
Have each child trace around both hands.
On one hand write:
GOD GIVES ME GIFTS.
On the other write:
I CAN HELP OTHERS.
Children draw or write ways they can use their hands to help.
Decorate with hearts and crosses.

Craft 3 — Five Talents to Share

Give each child five large paper coins.
On each coin, write or draw a way to use a gift for God.
Examples:
LOVE — HELP — SHARE — PRAY — ENCOURAGE
Glue the coins onto a sheet of paper.
Across the top write:
USE YOUR GIFTS FOR GOD!

7. Game

Game 1 — Use Your Gifts!

Read a situation aloud.
Ask children how they could use a gift or ability to help.
Situation 1: A friend is sad.
What could you do?
Comfort them or listen.
Situation 2: Someone drops their books.
What could you do?
Help pick them up.
Situation 3: A new child comes to Sunday school.
What could you do?
Welcome them and invite them to join you.
Situation 4: Someone is having trouble learning something.
What could you do?
Encourage them or offer to help.
Situation 5: Someone needs help carrying something.
What could you do?
Offer to help if it is safe.
After each answer, everyone says:
"I CAN USE MY GIFTS FOR GOD!"

Game 2 — Pass the Gift

Materials: A wrapped empty gift box.
Have children sit in a circle.
Pass the gift box around while music plays.
When the music stops, the child holding the box names one way to show God's love.
Examples:
"I can share!"
"I can pray!"
"I can help!"
"I can be kind!"
"I can encourage someone!"
Finish with everyone saying:
"THANK YOU, GOD, FOR OUR GIFTS!"

8. Song Suggestions

- This Little Light of Mine — Sharing God's love.
- Jesus Loves Me — God's love for each child.
- He's Got the Whole World in His Hands — God's care for everyone.
- I Have Decided to Follow Jesus — Faithful service.
- God Is So Good — Thankfulness.
- The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock — Wise choices.
- Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God — Putting God first.

- Take My Life, and Let It Be — Offering our lives to God.
- Make Me a Servant — Serving others.
- We Are One in the Spirit — Working together in love.

Simple Action Song

To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"
God gives us gifts,
God gives us gifts,
Every day,
Every day.
We can help each other,
We can love each other,
God's good way,
God's good way.

9. Snack Suggestions

Gift-Shaped Snacks

Serve small square sandwiches or biscuits.
Explain: "These look like little gifts. God has given us many wonderful gifts, and we can share what we have."

Sharing Fruit Plate

Offer a variety of age-appropriate fruits.
Invite the children to help distribute the fruit fairly.
Explain:
"Sharing is one way we can show God's love."

Snack Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for this food.
Thank you for all the gifts you give us.
Help us share with others.
Help us use our gifts wisely.
May everything we do show your love.
Amen.
Check allergies and prepare food safely for the children's ages.

10. Wrap Up & Reflections

Gather the children in a circle.
Ask: Who was Deborah?
A wise and brave leader who served God.
What did the master give his servants?
Talents, which were large amounts of money.
What did the first two servants do?
They put the money to work.

What did the third servant do?
He buried the money because he was afraid.
What can we learn from Jesus' story?
Use what we are given faithfully.
What gifts has God given you?
Allow children to share.
How can we use our gifts?
To help, share, encourage, and show love.

Say Together

GOD LOVES ME!
GOD GIVES ME GIFTS!
I CAN HELP OTHERS!
I CAN USE MY GIFTS FOR GOD!

11. Closing Prayer

Loving God,
Thank you for the wonderful gifts you give us.
Thank you for making each of us special.
Help us discover our gifts.
Help us use them wisely.
Give us courage when we are afraid.
Help us encourage one another.
Teach us to share, help, and love.
May our words and actions bring joy to others.
Help us serve you faithfully every day.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

12. Take-Home Idea

My Gifts from God Challenge

Send each child home with a small card.
This week I can use my gifts by:

- ☐ Helping someone at home.
- ☐ Sharing with a friend.
- ☐ Encouraging someone.
- ☐ Making something for another person.
- ☐ Praying for someone.
- ☐ Welcoming someone new.
- ☐ Thanking God for my abilities.

At the bottom:

❤️ I CAN USE MY GIFTS FOR GOD! ❤️

1 Thessalonians 5:11
Encourage families to talk about the gifts each person has and how those gifts can be used to help others.

13. Teacher Notes

Understanding the Parable of the Talents

Matthew 25:14–30 is a parable about faithfulness, responsibility, and stewardship.
In Jesus' time, a talent was a unit of weight used to measure precious metals and represented a very large amount of money.
The servants were entrusted with different amounts according to their abilities.
The first two servants used what they were given and were praised for their faithfulness.
The third servant acted out of fear and buried what had been entrusted to him.
For young children, connect the story to the importance of using our gifts and opportunities responsibly.

Important Teaching Points

1. God gives us gifts. Everyone has something valuable to contribute.
2. Our gifts are different. We do not all have the same abilities.
3. We can use our gifts to help others. Sharing, serving, encouraging, and caring are all ways to show love.
4. Faithfulness matters more than comparison. The first two servants receive the same praise even though they were entrusted with different amounts.
5. Fear can keep us from trying. God can help us find courage.
6. We can encourage one another. Paul reminds Christians to build each other up.

Connecting the Readings

Judges 4: Deborah demonstrates courage, wisdom, and faithful leadership.
Psalm 123: God's people look to God for mercy and help.
1 Thessalonians 5: Christians are encouraged to live as children of light, with faith, love, and hope, encouraging one another.
Matthew 25: Jesus teaches the importance of faithfully using what has been entrusted to us.

Important Teaching Clarification

The word talent in Matthew's Gospel refers to money, not a natural ability or skill.
The modern meaning of talent can be a useful teaching connection, but children should understand that Jesus' original story was about the faithful use of entrusted resources.
Also, avoid suggesting that children must be successful, wealthy, or exceptionally talented to please God.
The lesson is about faithfulness, not achievement.

A Note About Fear

The third servant is afraid.
Some children may identify with his fear.
Reassure them that being afraid does not mean God stops loving them.
Explain:
"Sometimes we are afraid to try something new. God understands our fears and helps us learn to be brave."

14. Anglican Connection

Stewardship — Using God's Gifts

Stewardship is an important part of Anglican Christian life.
Stewardship means caring responsibly for what God has entrusted to us.
This includes:

- Our time.
- Our abilities.
- Our money and possessions.
- Our relationships.
- Our church community.
- God's creation.

Explain to children:
"God gives us many gifts, and we can use them to help others and care for God's world."

The Baptismal Covenant

In Anglican worship, the Baptismal Covenant reminds Christians of their commitment to follow Jesus.
We promise, with God's help, to:

- Continue in worship, prayer, and learning.
- Share the good news of Jesus.
- Love and serve others.
- Seek justice and peace.
- Respect the dignity of every human being.
- Care for God's creation.

The response is: "I will, with God's help."
Explain: "We do not have to do everything by ourselves. God helps us use our gifts."

Serving in the Church

There are many ways people use their gifts in an Anglican parish.
Some people:

- Read the Bible during worship.
- Sing in the choir.
- Help prepare the church.
- Welcome people at the door.
- Teach Sunday school.
- Prepare food for gatherings.
- Visit people who are lonely.

- Help care for the church building.
- Pray for others.
- Support people in need.

Ask the children: "What is something you could do to help in our church?"
Explain that even young children can serve God through kindness, prayer, sharing, and helping.

The Church Year

November 15 falls near the end of the season after Pentecost.
The liturgical colour is green. Green reminds us of growth.
Just as plants grow, we can grow in faith, love, and service.
The Gospel reading encourages us to be faithful as we await the return of Christ.

This Week's Message

God has given each of us wonderful gifts and abilities. Deborah shows us how to use wisdom and courage. Psalm 123 reminds us to trust God for help. Paul teaches us to encourage one another, and Jesus reminds us to be faithful with what we have been given. We can use our gifts to help others and share God's love every day.

❤️ USE YOUR GIFTS FOR GOD! ❤️

These lesson plans are designed as a collection of ideas rather than a single lesson that must be completed in full. Teachers are encouraged to choose the stories, crafts, games, and worksheets that best suit the ages, abilities, and interests of the children they teach.

Use Your Gifts for God!

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost



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Use Your Gifts for God!

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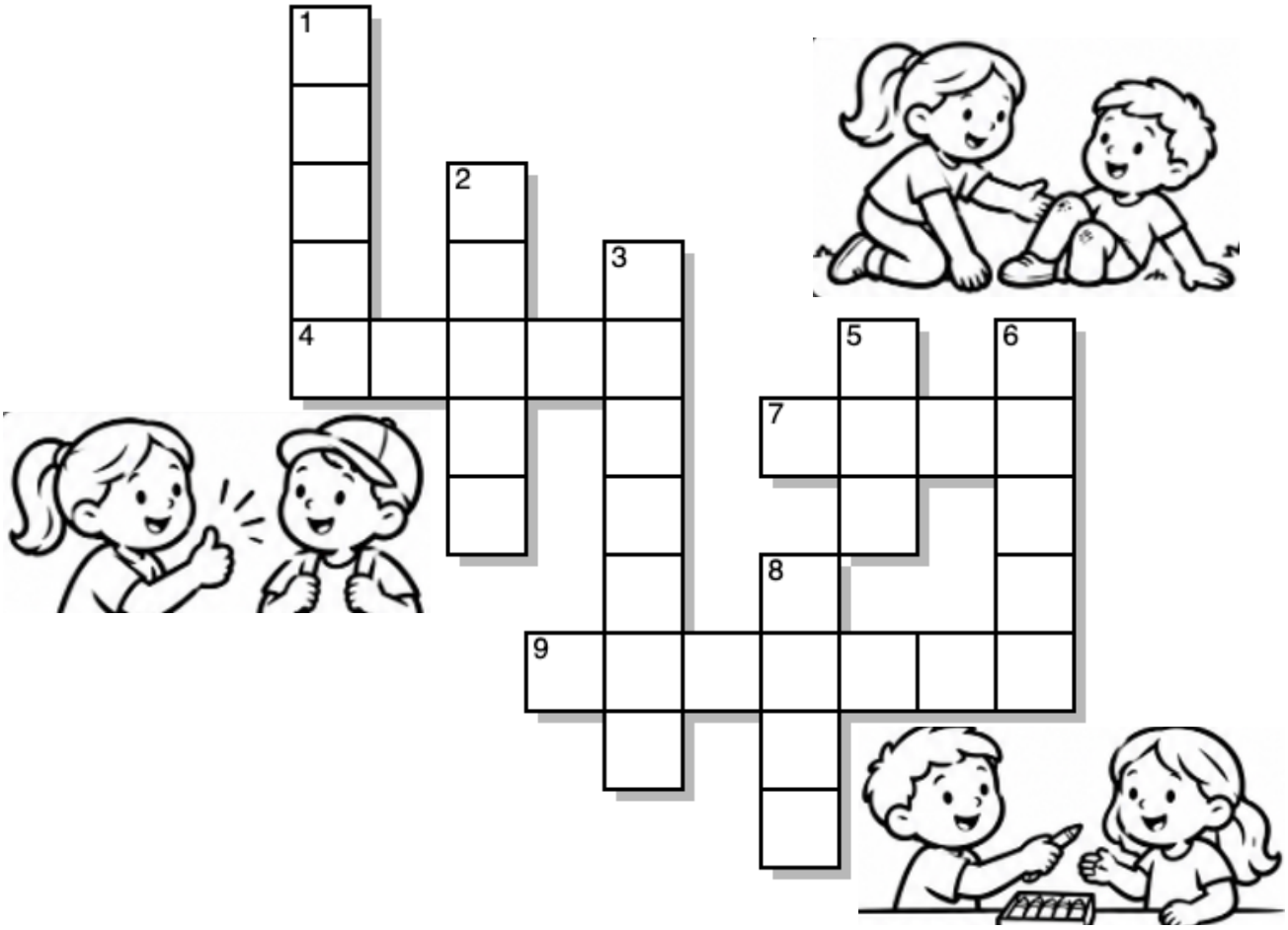


ACROSS

4 We can _____ with others.
7 We can show God's _____ to others.
9 What did the master give his servants?



DOWN

1 God gives us special _____.
2 Deborah was wise and _____.
3 Who was the wise leader in Judges?
5 Who gives us wonderful gifts?
6 Who told the parable of the talents?
8 We can _____ someone who needs assistance.

Use Your Gifts for God!

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

J H K E S U S E J L

B P A L R T D N I K

Q R L R N A X B J M

G B A E O D H L L T

Y I L V H B O S J M

B A F D E V E G T L

T D R T E V O D J L

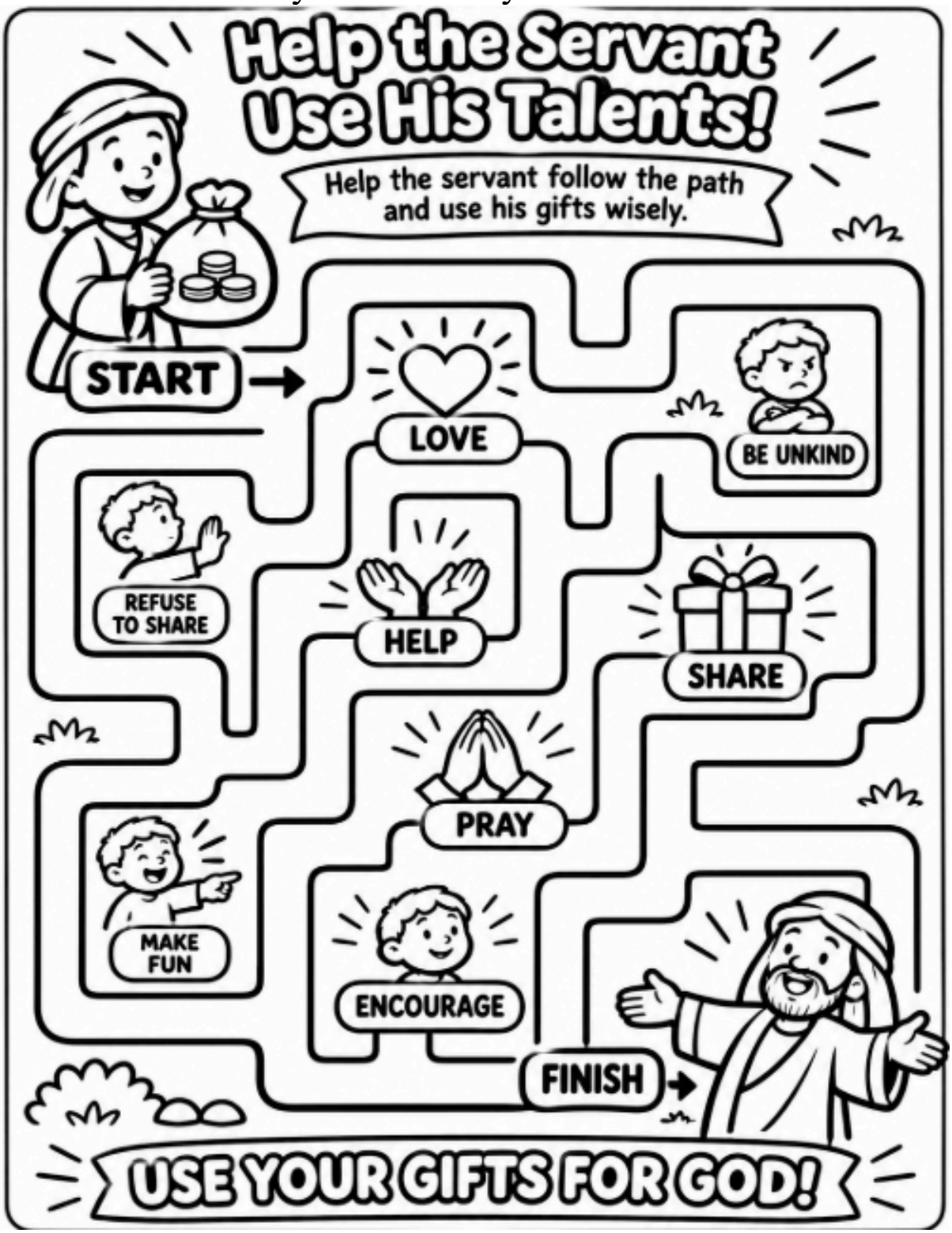
L W M P S D Z N D M

God
Share
Help
Brave
Talents
Kind
Jesus
Love
Gifts
Deborah
Pray



Use Your Gifts for God!

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost



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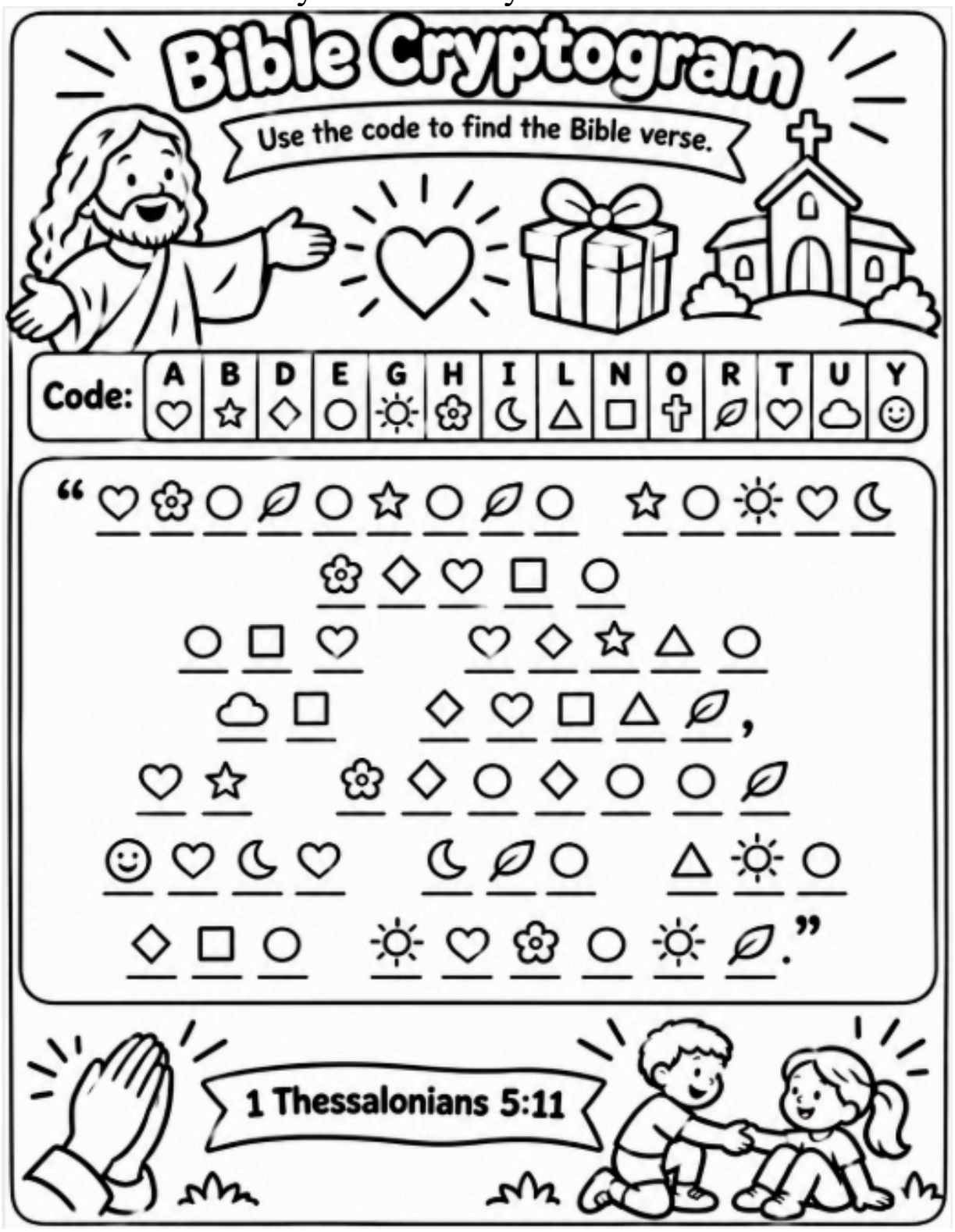

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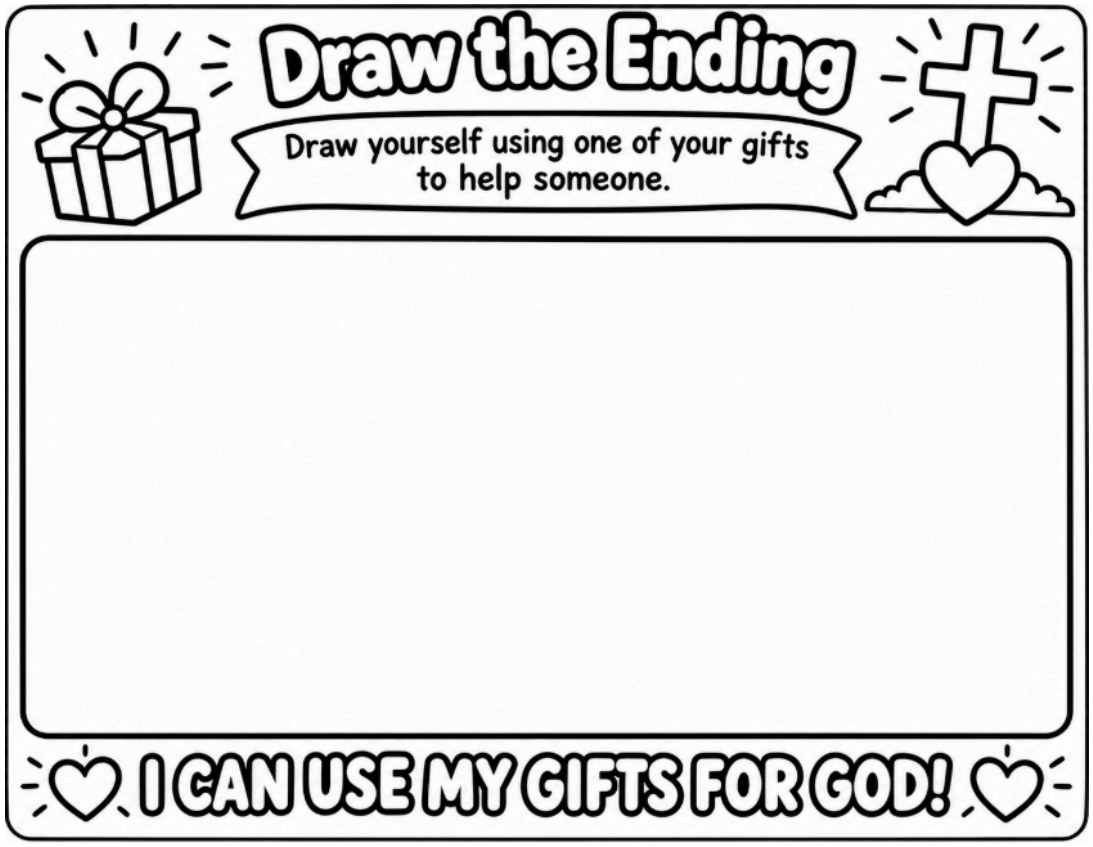



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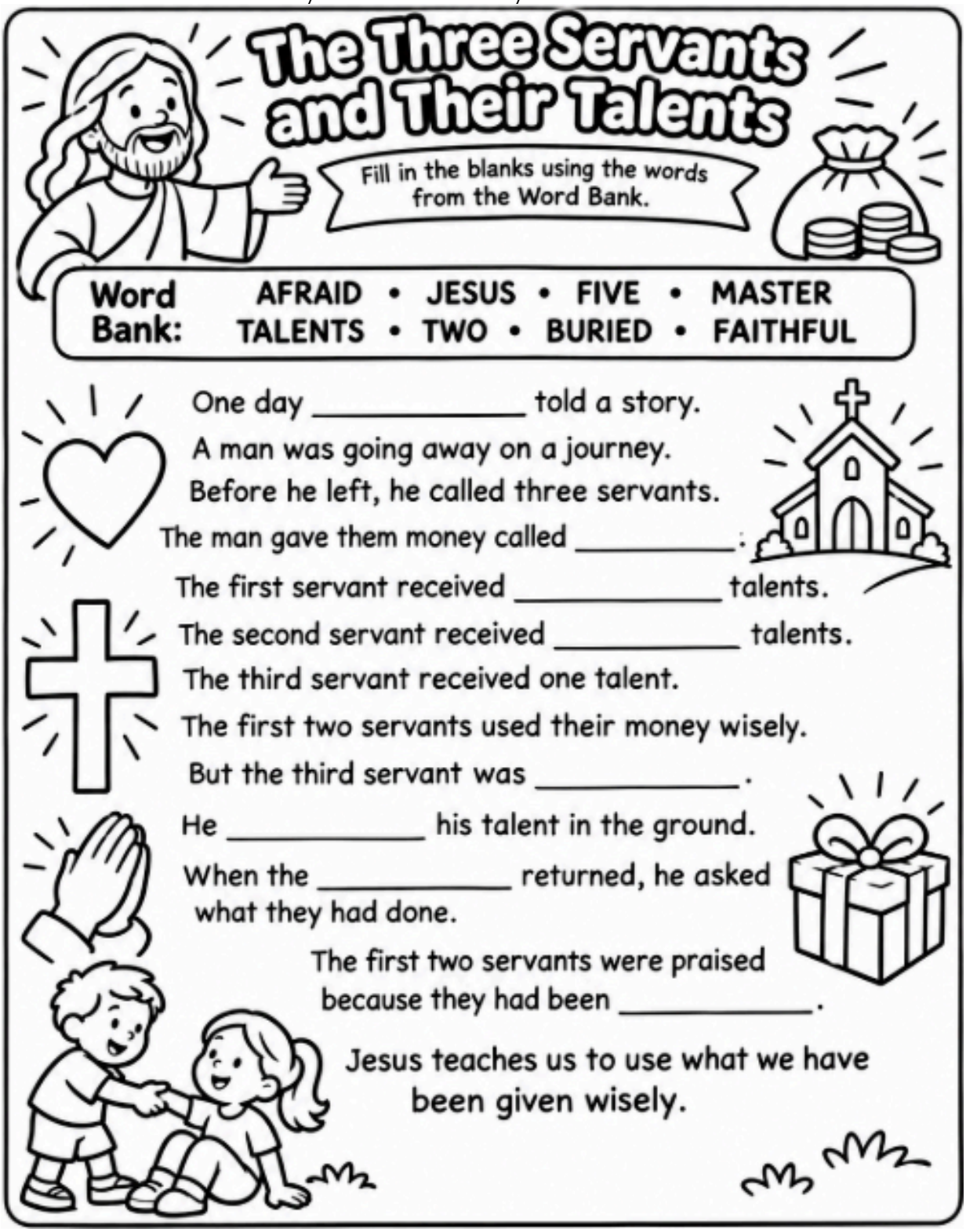

Use Your Gifts for God!

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost



Crossword - Key

Across	Down
4. Share	1. Gifts
7. Love	2. Brave
9. Talents	3. Deborah
	5. God
	6. Jesus
	8. Help

Cryptogram – Key:

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Fill-in-the-Blank – Key

Jesus
Talents
Five
Two
Afraid
Buried
Master
Faithful