



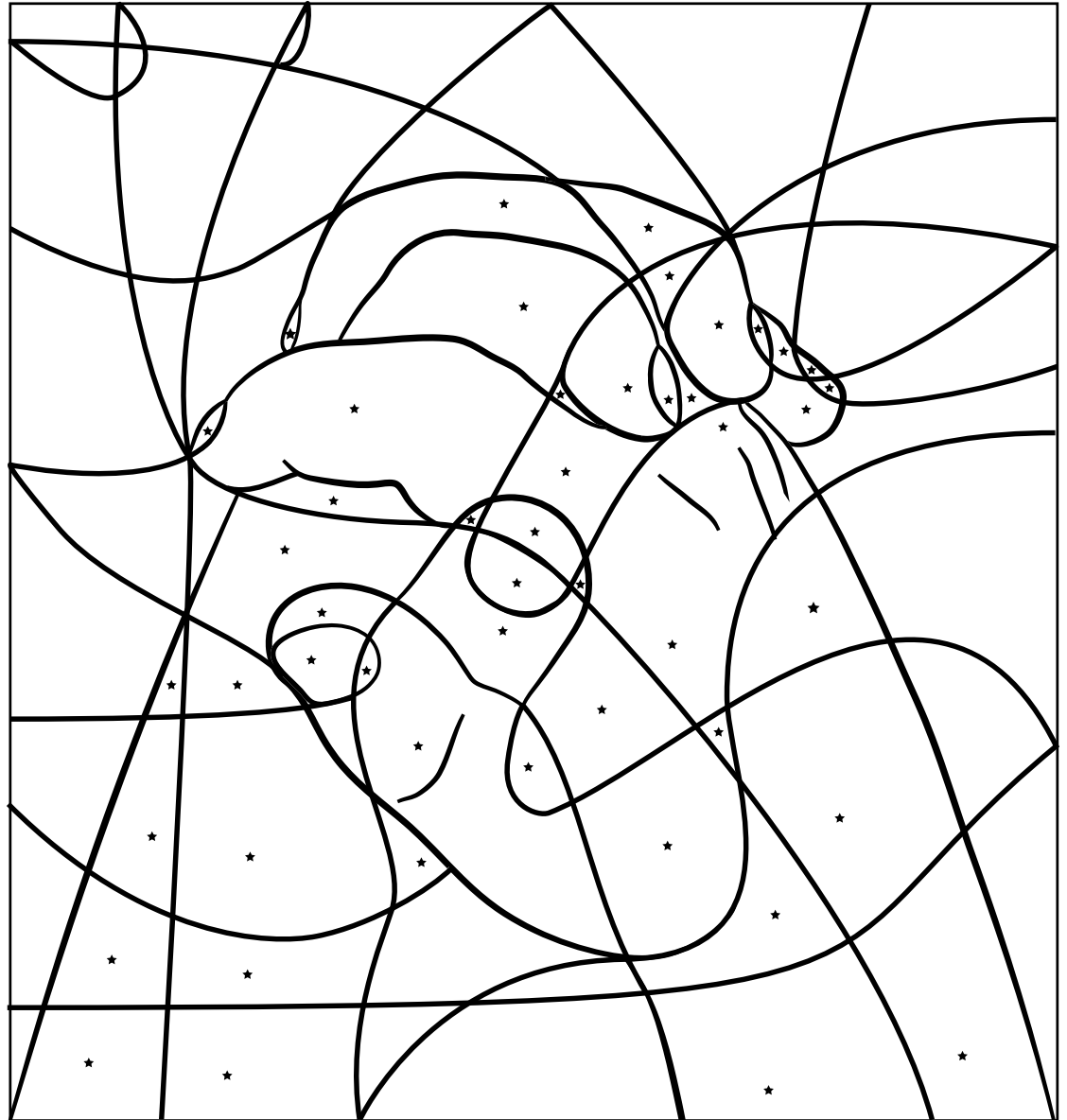
## 2 Pray

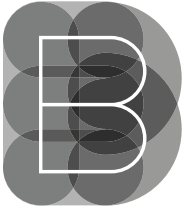
Prayer is woven into most spiritual practices because it is an essential component of time with God. Drawing closer to God doesn't just happen with an occasional conversation. It requires consistent conversation, expressing all sorts of feelings, and listening as well. Prayer is the foundation of a deepening relationship with God.

- Make a prayer chain. Cut strips of paper or construction paper. On each strip write the name of someone or something you would like to pray for. Think about family members, friends, people you see each week, and even people you don't know. Add situations or concerns in your life, your school and community, and the world. Write things you are thankful for. Then mix up all the strips. Form a ring with one strip and staple or tape it together. Add the other strips, one at a time, to make a chain. Each day, tear off a ring and use it for a prayer.
- Make a prayer journal. Write or draw pictures of your prayers each day and date the page. As you see God working through your prayers, go back and make a note in your journal. Maybe it wasn't the way you thought something would be, but see where God's presence is in each prayer.
- Try new ways of praying—perhaps walking, coloring, using a breath prayer, having a prayer partner, and using your body.

Dear God, praying isn't always easy. We think we need fancy words or special prayers, but help us remember we can just talk with you in our own words or with no words at all. Amen.

Color the spaces with stars to see one way we can communicate with God.





## BIBLE STORY

Based on verses from Luke 5:1–6:16

Wherever Jesus went, happy people called out, “Jesus! Come here!” They wanted to talk and spend time with him. “Woow!” others would gasp around him as Jesus miraculously made the painful skin disease on a man disappear. “Amazing!” people shouted as Jesus cured the man born with broken legs. “Praise God!” others loudly exclaimed as Jesus healed the man with the withered hand. But there were also unhappy people around Jesus who murmured, “No! Do not praise God!” They seemed to always want to argue with Jesus. “You should stop! Why are you breaking God’s laws? Who do you think you are?!”

To get away from all the people and noise, Jesus went to a mountain. Finally, Jesus had a quiet place to pray. He began praying and kept on praying and praying. Jesus prayed all night! When the sun came up, he returned to the people. There were many waiting for him. Out of all those people, Jesus chose twelve of them to be part of a special team, his *disciples*, or students. The disciples were: Simon (whom Jesus named Peter), Simon’s brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who would one day betray Jesus. The disciples’ job was to stick close to Jesus and learn what he said and did.

After Jesus made his important decision about the disciples, Jesus continued to teach and heal people. And throughout it all, he continued to pray, sometimes with people and sometimes alone.

Based on Psalm 136

**Thank you, God**—for being good!

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God!** You’re the God of all gods—

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God!** You’re the Lord of all Lords.

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God**—for being the only one who makes great wonders.

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God**—for making the skies with skill—

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God**—for shaping the earth on the water—

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God**—for providing food for all living things—

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

**Thank you, God!** You’re the God of heaven—

**God always loves! Your love will never stop!**

