



FAMILY MINISTRIES

faith + everyday life = Family Faith Formula

The formula for family faith is simple, make talking about how God is working in the world part of everyday life. Our University Christian Church 2022 Lenten theme is *The Gospel of Nobodies* and is based off of the Gospel of Luke. Each day throughout Lent, as a church, we will read the Gospel of Luke. The Family Faith Lenten Packet will help your family journey through lent as you make connections with the sacred text of Luke and experience intentional faith conversations, spiritual practices, and encounter the Divine with your family. In this Lenten faith packet, you will find opportunities to lead your family in simple, sacred moments and start conversations about the holy.

Enclosed you will find a Word a Day Lenten Calendar, a color-create-and-play resurrection set, Table Talk Cards, You've Been Egged Activity Page and this Family Faith Lenten packet, to guide your family in simple spiritual practices.

Table of Contents

Family Faith Activities (Spiritual Practices)

We Come from Dust (Ash Wednesday)	p. 3
Word a Day Lenten Calendar	p. 4
Table Talk Cards	p. 5
Color-Create-Play Resurrection Set	p. 6
Share an Easter Gift	p. 8
You've Been Egged	p. 8

Prayers

We Look for God's Presence	p. 9
A Prayer Celebrating Uniqueness	p. 9
A Prayer about Love and Neighbors	p. 10
Body Prayers	p. 10

Remember, Lent is a time of growing spiritually as we look toward the hope that Easter brings. Take your time during this season. Choose one or two things from this packet that work for your family and keep conversations about God happening in your everyday routines. Perfection is not our goal—growing in faith as a family is our hope.

We Come from Dust



In the book of Genesis, the very first book in the Bible, we read, “Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). In Hebrew, the original language of the book of Genesis, there is a very close link between the word ‘adam’, meaning “man” or “human being,” and adam, meaning “ground.” The adam was made from the adam: the human from the ground.

The image of God breathing into the dirt and creating humanity is a powerful one. What makes us different from a ceramic jar is God’s breath in us, that close and intimate link between us and God. At the end of our lives, as our breath or spirit returns to God, our bodies will turn to dust again as a part of nature. On Ash Wednesday, you can remember this link at home by replacing ashes with dirt.

University Christian Church will remember Ash Wednesday on March 2 at 6:30 with a brief worship and imposition of ashes. Your children are welcome to take part in the service. We will also have childcare available. But, if your family would like to experience Ash Wednesday at home, try this activity (on Ash Wednesday, or anytime during Lent).

Activity: Take a small scoop of dirt from the ground and place it in a dish. Let each person in your family squish it around with their fingers. Read Genesis 2:7 and explain the connection between the word “ground” and the word “human.” Explain in simple language, that all people return to the earth after they die. Then, if you like, make a cross shape on the back of your hand and say, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Amen.”

Word a Day Lenten Calendar

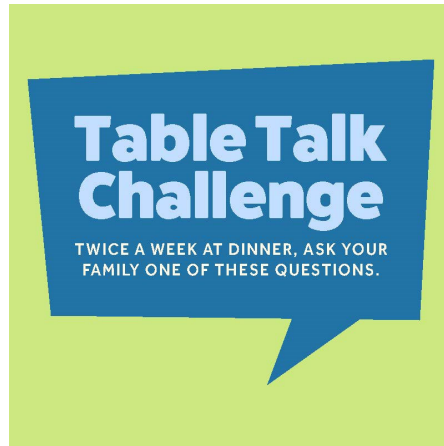


As we journey through Lent, the congregation of University Christian Church is invited to read through the Gospel of Lent together. We will kick off this reading project on Sunday, March 6 in worship. You are invited to read along with your family and church family. A Word a Day Lenten calendar is provided to help your family take part in this church-wide activity. For each day of Lent through the week following Easter, a scripture reading and focus word for the day is provided based on that reading. Each word can allow your family time to explore and focus on a new aspect of faith in your everyday life.

Ideas for engaging with the word for the day...

- Draw a picture or take a picture of something the word brings to mind
- Write a journal entry using the word as a prompt
- Use the word as a conversation starter in your home. Popular times for these conversations are in the car or gathered around the breakfast table.
- Try to put the word into action during your daily activities.
- Do what works best for your family. Miss a day? No worries, pick back up where you can and remember that our goal is faith conversations at home to build a strong faith foundation for our children.

Table Talk Cards



A simple meal was central to Jesus' ministry. A simple family meal can be the primary place that faith practices happen for a family. Saying a prayer, having conversations, reading a Bible verse, celebrating rituals and traditions and spending time together all happen around the table. Gathering around the family table at meal time helps us establish connection, enjoy one another and opens the door to many conversations in your home and beyond.

Activity: Use the enclosed Table Talk Cards to spark conversations in your home. You will find a new card for each week of the Lenten season. Ask the questions of your family at a meal and enjoy the conversation as everyone shares their ideas and hopes.

Here are other ways you can expand on the Table Talk Cards

- Your kids' thoughts will change over time. Record your answers on the back of each card with the date. Save the cards and revisit them in a few months. How have your answers changed?
- Get together with another family and do the Table Talk questions together. How are your family ideas similar? How are you different? Learn more about your friends!
- Have your kids call grandparents or other important people in their lives and ask them the Table Talk questions. Have the adults share why they answered the way they did. It's a great way to encourage multigenerational conversations.

Resurrection Set



The enclosed color-create-play Resurrection Set is designed to engage your family in acting out the miraculous story of Easter. For children, the death of Jesus is complex and can be scary to try to understand. For adults, answering the question “what does the death of Jesus mean?” is a lifelong pursuit—we can help our children grow in faith by focusing on the importance of resurrection for our children. The idea that Jesus living forever means that all things are made new and we can have hope. Have fun coloring and acting out the scenes from Easter morning. Read Luke 24 and focus on the surprise and mystery the women experienced when they approached the tomb. What must that have been like? Jesus lives!

Activity: Follow the instructions with the Resurrection Set and as a family, color, create and play out the resurrection story.

Head Outside



Instead of: Giving up screens or reducing screen time

Try: Heading outside

Screens are part of our life now, in just about every imaginable way. From navigating directions to taking photos to playing games, I know I'm not alone when I say that I have a cell phone near me at (almost) all times. The same is true from our children. Many people lament the use of screens or feel guilty about their screen time and screen usage. Instead of becoming overwhelmed with guilt or spinning your wheels figuring out what to do, try tracking the amount of time you spend outside instead. Make a habit of keeping the screens inside (or turn them on Do Not Disturb mode) while you're outside so that by default being outside means no screens. You'll add the beauty and wonder of the outdoors into your life and perhaps discovery that the riches you find there bring peace of mind, joy, and excitement. There are so many things to do outside; you can find ideas in this book and elsewhere. The outdoors is full of unexplored treasures!

Activity: Go Outside!

Lenten challenge for heading outside: How many hours can you log outside this Lent? Keep notes below of your time outside and what you did while in God's creation.

Date	Hours	What we did in God's Creation

"Excerpted from Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection by Traci Smith (Chalice Press: 2021, All Rights Reserved)."

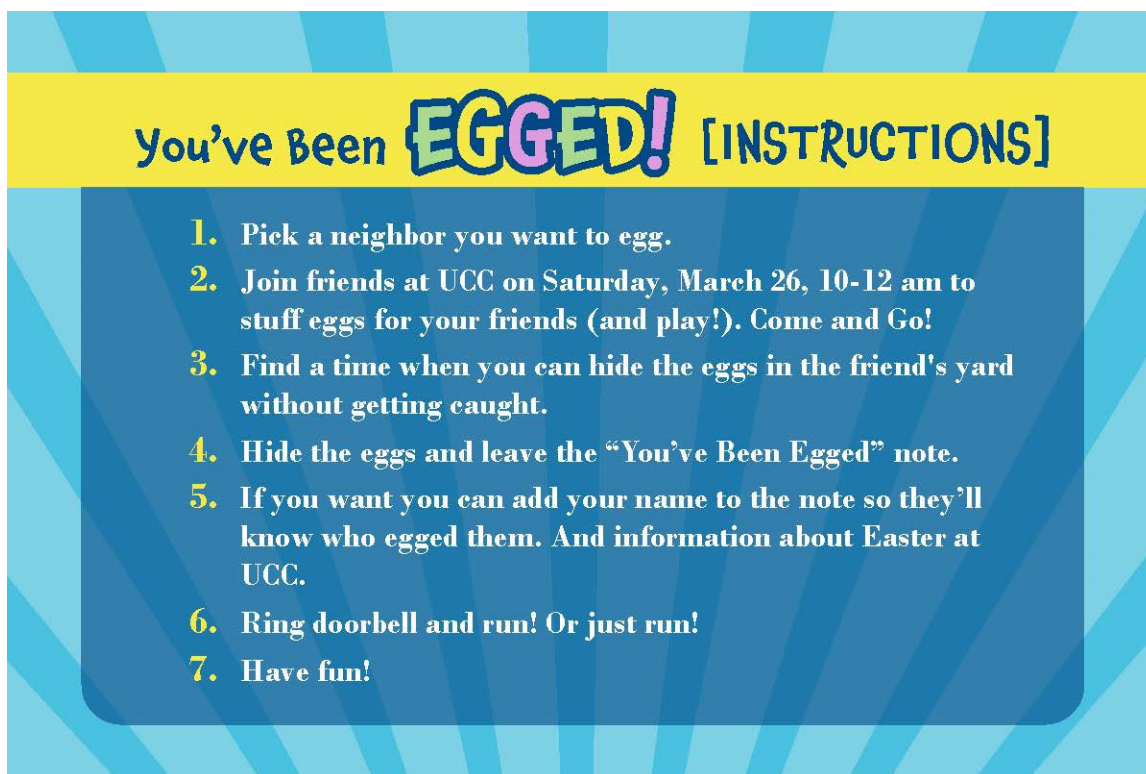
Share an Easter Gift

The news of resurrection is good news, and it is meant to be shared. It is important to share our faith in ways that are generous and kind and don't impose on other people. The good news of Easter is a gift. It is freely given and freely received. Here are some simple ways to share an Easter gift with a friend or neighbor.

- Give real or crafted flowers.
- Draw a picture of a butterfly or paint a wooden butterfly.
- Make bread or cookies.
- Draw an Easter message on the sidewalk in chalk.
- Make a special card.

With each of your gifts, you might choose to attach a card that says "Happy Easter" or a note that says "For You!" If someone asks you about your faith, be ready to share a story about why Easter is important to you. "Excerpted from Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection by Traci Smith (Chalice Press: 2021, All Rights Reserved)."

Activity: You've Been Egged!



You've Been EGGED! [INSTRUCTIONS]

1. Pick a neighbor you want to egg.
2. Join friends at UCC on Saturday, March 26, 10-12 am to stuff eggs for your friends (and play!). Come and Go!
3. Find a time when you can hide the eggs in the friend's yard without getting caught.
4. Hide the eggs and leave the "You've Been Egged" note.
5. If you want you can add your name to the note so they'll know who egged them. And information about Easter at UCC.
6. Ring doorbell and run! Or just run!
7. Have fun!

Prayers



As We Look for God's Presence

God, as we begin the season of Lent, Easter and Resurrection, help us look for your presence...

In prayer,

In our spiritual practice,

In nature,

In one another.

Bless our days, that we may grow in faith, hope and love.

Amen

A Prayer Celebrating Uniqueness

In our world there are...

many sizes

many ages

many colors

many shapes

many languages

many ideas

many perspectives

many moods

many personalities.

May we see the image of God in one another. Amen.

A prayer about Love and Neighbors

When we love our neighbors, we love God.

When we love God, we love our neighbors.

Loving God and loving our neighbors is the center of our faith.

Amen.

“Excerpted from Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection by Traci Smith (Chalice Press: 2021, All Rights Reserved).”

Body Prayers

One easy way to try something new in your prayer practice is to use your body in prayer. Focusing quietly with folded hands and a bowed head is surely one way to pray, but there are many other postures and way to orient your body in prayer. Try one of these.

- **Kneeling.** Try kneeling with hands folded, or kneeling with your body folded over your knees.
- **Lying flat on your back.** Try this one outside on a beautiful day, or at night under the stars.
- **Lifting hands high.** Try offering prayers of gratitude from this position.
- **Sitting.** Pray with hands gently in your lap, or holding hands around a table.
- **Walking.** Sometimes the walk can be a prayer all on its own.
- **Wiggling.** The preferred prayer position of many a young person! If your body wants to move, sometimes letting it move is the best course of action.
- **Adding motions to a prayer.** Make up your own motions to a familiar prayer, such as the Lord’s Prayer.
- **Dancing.** Dance freely to music or silence, or try out classical dance positions as you pray.

As you test of the different prayer positions, ask yourself or other members of your family “How did that position feel during prayer?” or “How did I feel connected to God in this prayer position?” Over time you might discover that one position or another becomes a favorite.

“Excerpted from Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection by Traci Smith (Chalice Press: 2021, All Rights Reserved).”

INSTRUCTIONS

Supplies: Paper (cardstock if possible), colored pencils/crayons/markers, scissors, and tape (or glue)



Print out and color the character pieces and the background set. We recommend cardstock if you have some.



Cut out each character piece along the dotted lines and along the top border of the background set pieces.



Fold each character piece in half. Fold both background set pages in half vertically. Cut the character pieces along the rounded dotted line to create the top rounded corners.



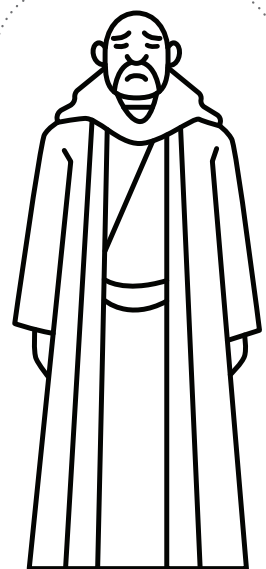
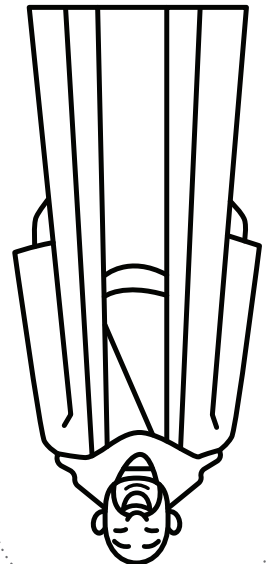
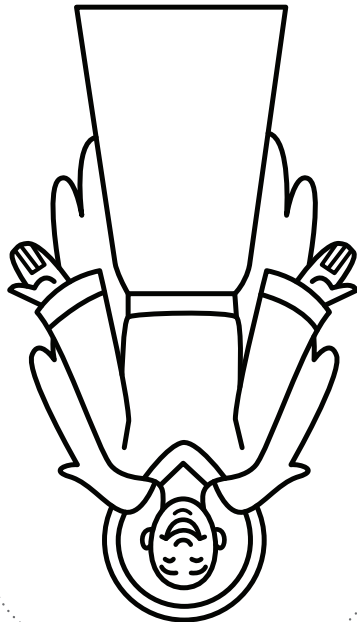
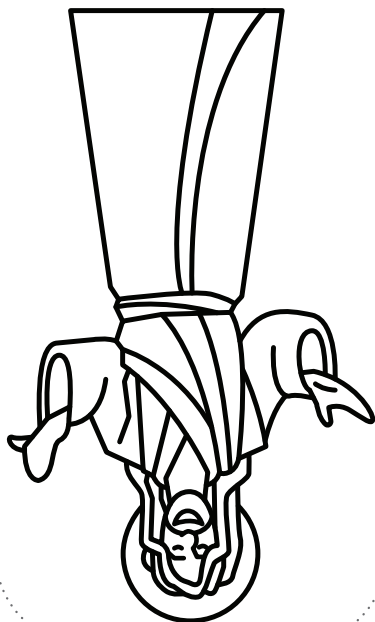
Fold up the bottom edges along the gray fold line on one side.

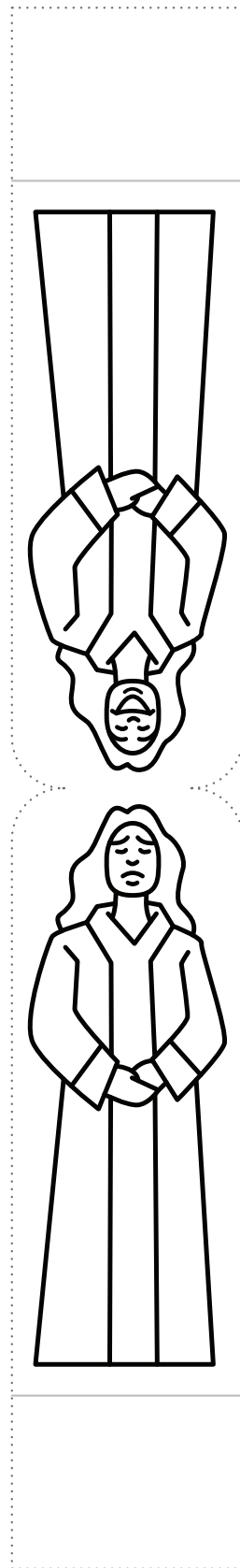
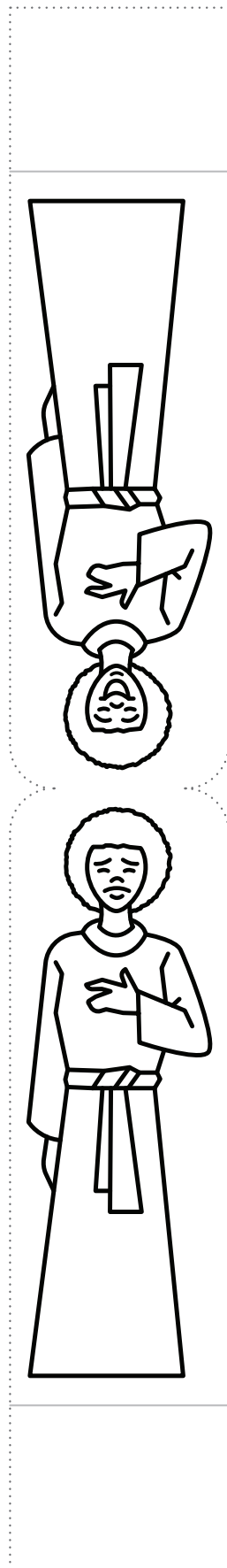
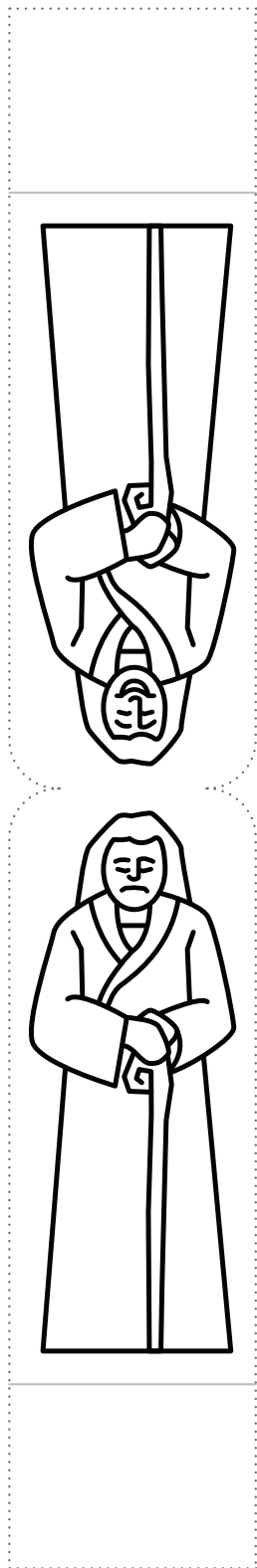
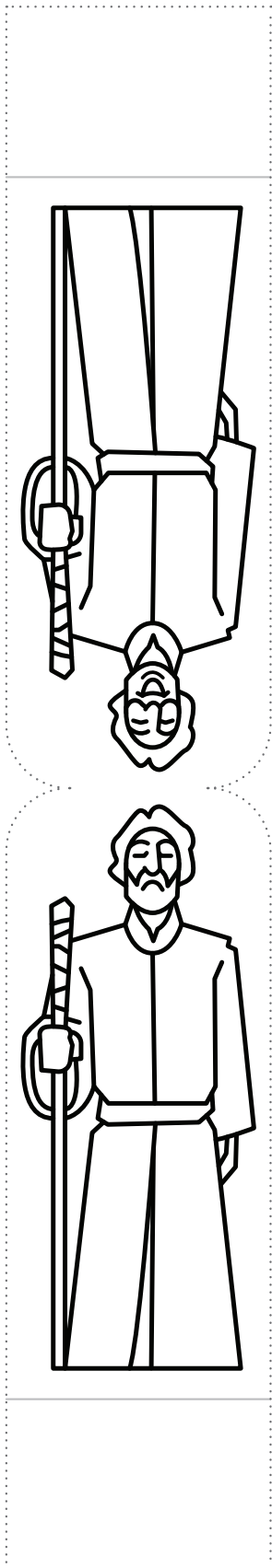


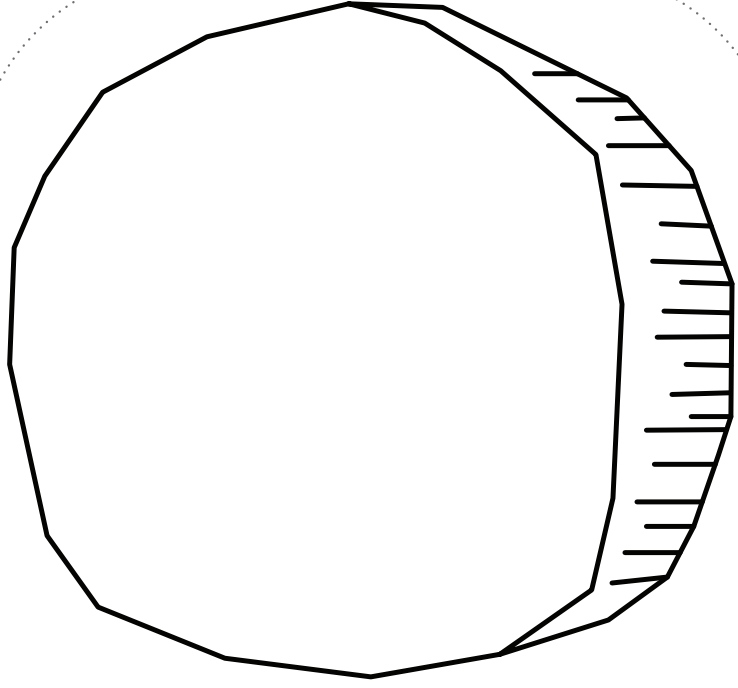
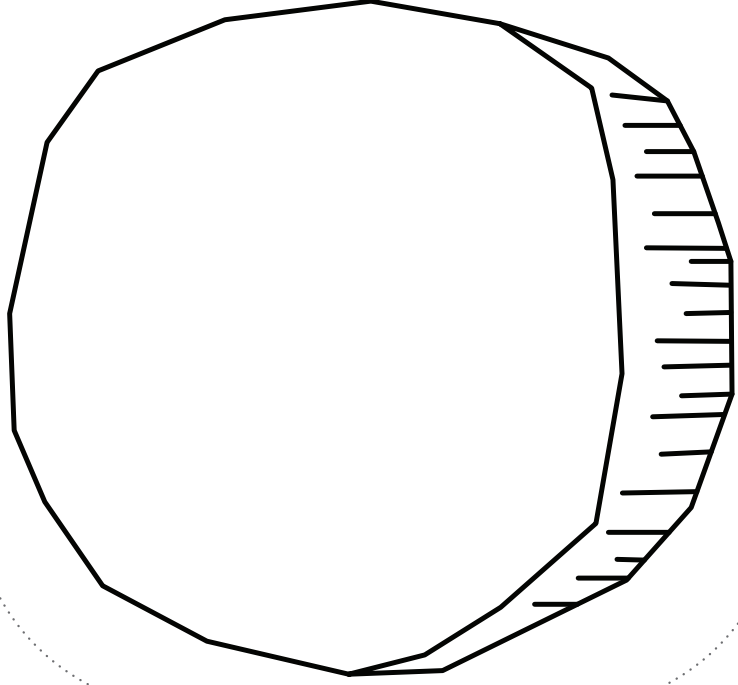
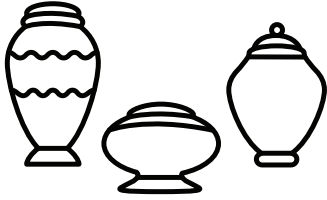
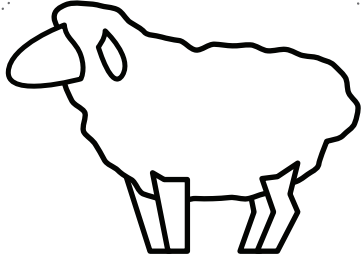
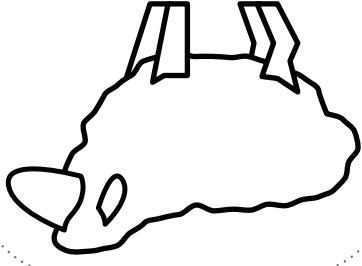
Unfold the top flap and place a piece of tape where the folded edges meet.

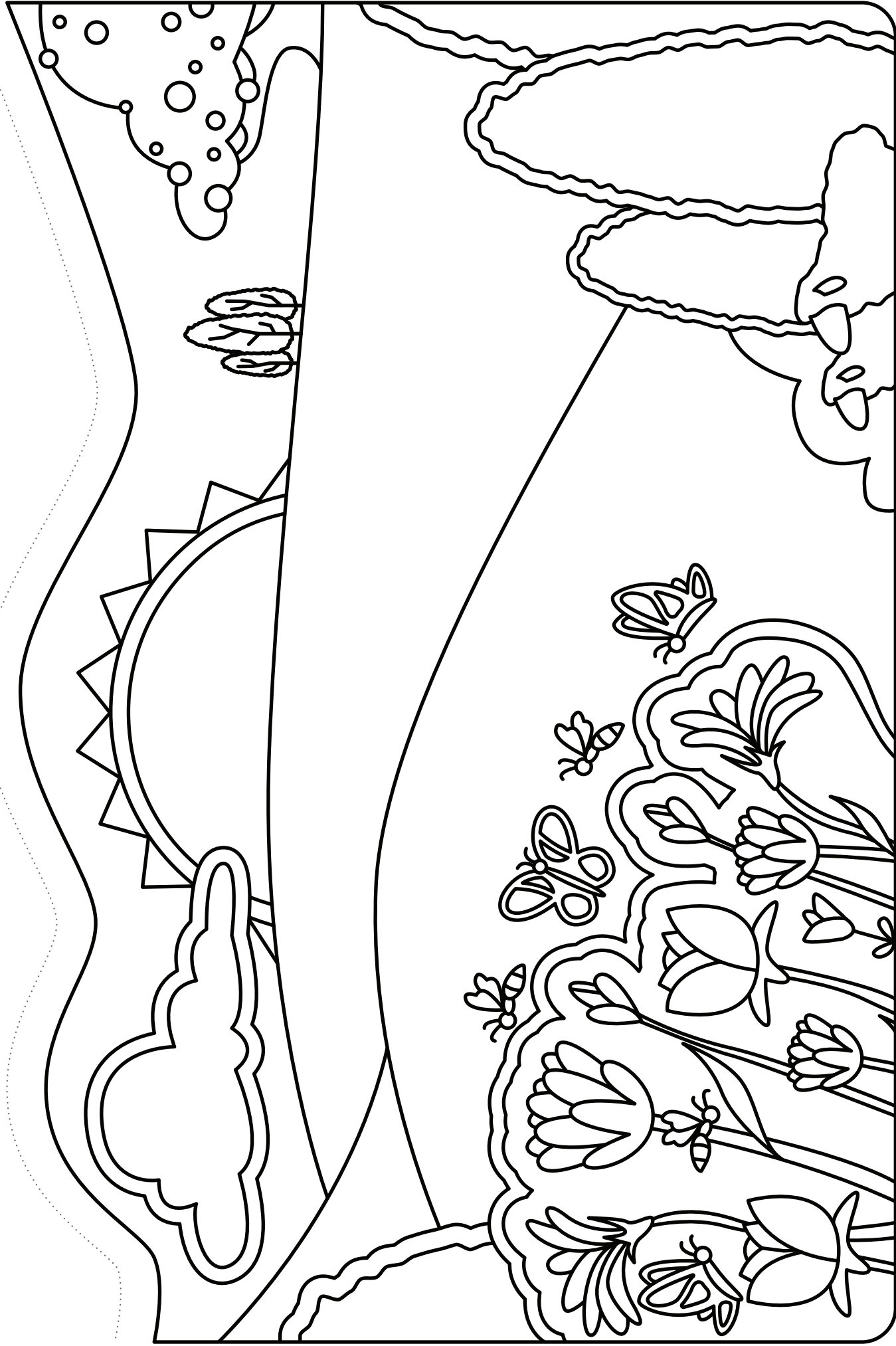


Set up your scene and have fun!









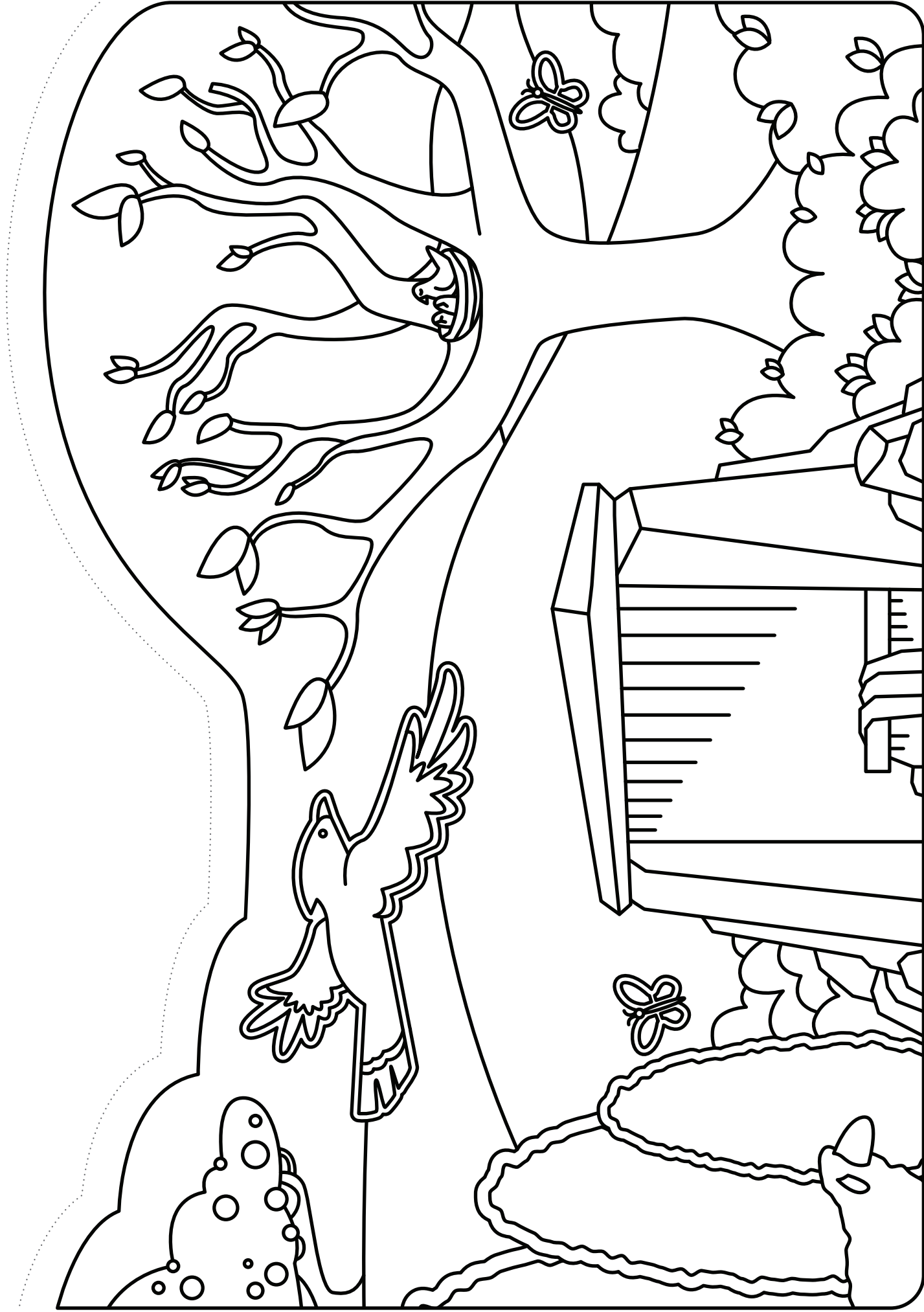


Table Talk Challenge

TWICE A WEEK AT DINNER, ASK YOUR
FAMILY ONE OF THESE QUESTIONS.

Table Talk Week 1

Q: What is the best thing about our family?

Q: How do we help our neighbors? How do our neighbors help us?

Table Talk Week 2

Q: What are some of
our favorite activities
to do as a family?

Q: What are some activities
we want to try?

Table Talk Week 3

Q: Why do you think God gave us all different gifts and talents rather than having us all be good at the same things?

Q: How can you help other people find their special talents?

Table Talk Week 4

- Q:** If you could fill an Easter basket for anyone, who would it be?
- Q:** What would you put in the basket? Why did you choose those things?

Table Talk Week 5

Q: What is the first thing you think of when someone says "Easter"?

Q: How does loving others fit into your image of Easter?

Table Talk Week 6

Q: In what way can we show love to our neighbors?

Q: Can we think of any neighbors that might need more love this month?

Table Talk Week 7

Q: Do we have any neighbors we could invite to church? How can we invite them?

Q: What is your favorite thing about our church?

Table Talk Week 8

Q: What is your favorite part about the Easter season? Why?

Q: What is one thing you wish you could help other people understand about Easter?

Word a Day Lenten Calendar

Week 1			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
March 6	Sunday		Magnify
March 7	Monday	Luke 1:1-38	Surprise
March 8	Tuesday	Luke 1:39-66	Promise
March 9	Wednesday	Luke 1:67-2:20	New
March 10	Thursday	Luke 2:21-52	Wisdom
March 11	Friday	Luke 3:1-22	Give
March 12	Saturday	Luke 3:23-4:13	Tempt

Week 2			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
March 13	Sunday		Go
March 14	Monday	Luke 4:14-44	Quiet
March 15	Tuesday	Luke 5:1-32	Help
March 16	Wednesday	Luke 5:33-6:16	Think
March 17	Thursday	Luke 6:17-49	Bless
March 18	Friday	Luke 7:1-35	Faith
March 19	Saturday	Luke 7:36-8:21	Root

Week 3			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
March 20	Sunday		Found
March 21	Monday	Luke 8:22-56	Storm
March 22	Tuesday	Luke 9:1-27	Miracle
March 23	Wednesday	Luke 9:28-50	Welcome
March 24	Thursday	Luke 9:51-10:24	Home
March 25	Friday	Luke 10:25-11:13	Neighbor
March 26	Saturday	Luke 11:14-54	Light

Week 4			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
March 27	Sunday		Beauty
March 28	Monday	Luke 12:1-34	Worry
March 29	Tuesday	Luke 12:35-13:9	Repent
March 30	Wednesday	Luke 13:10-13:35	Seed
March 31	Thursday	Luke 14:1-35	Hear
April 1	Friday	Luke 15:1-32	Lost
April 2	Saturday	Luke 16:1-31	Serve

Week 5			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
April 3	Sunday		See
April 4	Monday	Luke 17:1-37	Forgive
April 5	Tuesday	Luke 18:1-30	Justice
April 6	Wednesday	Luke 18:31-19:10	Seek
April 7	Thursday	Luke 19:11-28	Words
April 8	Friday	Luke 19:29-20:19	Learn
April 9	Saturday	Luke 20:20-21:4	Sincere

Week 6			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
April 10	Sunday		Save
April 11	Monday	Luke 21:5-38	Tree
April 12	Tuesday	Luke 22:1-30	Bread
April 13	Wednesday	Luke 11:31-62	Deny
April 14	Thursday	Luke 22:63-23:12	Power
April 15	Friday	Luke 23:13-46	Breathe
April 16	Saturday	Luke 23:47-56	Care

Week 7			
Date	Day	Reading	Word of the Day
April 17	Sunday		Alive
April 18	Monday	Luke 24:1-12	Rise
April 19	Tuesday	Luke 24:13-24	Near
April 20	Wednesday	Luke 24:25-32	Stay
April 21	Thursday	Luke 24:33-49	Wonder
April 22	Friday	Luke 24:50-53	Joy
April 23	Saturday	Acts 1:1-8	Prayer
April 24	Sunday	Acts 1:9-14	Promise



You've Been **EGGED!**

Ten eggs have been hidden somewhere in your yard,
Good luck finding them, hope it's not too hard.

We chose to "egg you" because we care,
we also had an invitation we wanted to share!

Our Easter worship is something special we do,
it would mean so much to share it with you.

Happy Easter from our family to you,
wishing you love and joy whatever you do.