

God Created the World

God, Our Father (Old Testament)

Friendship
BIBLE STUDIES

Acknowledgments

Faith Alive Christian Resources is grateful to Cindy Ver Hage for revising this unit, one of seven included in the *God, Our Father (Old Testament)* Friendship Bible Studies. Cindy is a freelance author from Midland Park, New Jersey, where she helped to start a Friendship program in her church.

The biblical backgrounds (focusing on God's Word) in each session plan were written by the late Dr. Harvey A. Smit, theological editor at CRC Publications.

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We are indebted to Martie Bultman and the late Marcy Vanderwel for providing a program model and for serving as contributing editors for the first edition of *Friendship, Year One* (1982, CRC Publications). We also acknowledge Dr. Thomas Hoeksema, Rev. Gerald Oosterveen, Lenora Ridder, Rev. Bob Uken, Char Veenstra, Dr. Jack Wiersma, and Greg Yoder—all experts in the field of special education—for their valuable advice in shaping the first edition and helping to make Friendship Ministries what it is today.

We're grateful to Friendship Ministries for paying the development costs of this unit. Friendship Ministries is a nondenominational Christian foundation that promotes the spiritual development of youth and adults with intellectual disabilities and encourages churches to include these people in their fellowship. Special recognition goes to Ralph and Carol Honderd for their untiring efforts to raise funds for this revision.

Illustrated by Jack Kershner, Tim Foley, and Kirby Huseby.

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We welcome your comments. Call us at 1-800-333-8300 or e-mail us at editors@faithaliveresources.org or friendship@friendship.org. Or visit the Friendship website at www.Friendship.org.

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Dedication

The Friendship Ministries Board of Directors dedicates this unit in memory of Marcy Vanderwel, a contributing author for the first edition of *Friendship* developed in 1982. Marcy was an untiring advocate for people with mental impairments in her church and community.



Introduction

The mission of Friendship Ministries is to share God's love with people who have mental impairments and to enable them to become an active part of God's family. Friendship Bible Studies, a church education curriculum for youth and adults with mental impairments, forms the basis for Friendship Ministries. It is centered on Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments.

LEADER TIP

The chart on page 76 of this guide presents an overview of Friendship Bible Studies and shows how this unit fits into the overall curriculum. For additional information about organizing and leading a Friendship program, you'll want to order the *Friendship Program Guide* (available from Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1-800-333-8300 or www.FaithAliveResources.org). To help mentors understand their role, order the pamphlet *So You've Been Asked To Be a Friendship Teacher* (also available from Faith Alive.)

How Is This Unit Designed?

Each unit consists of four components:

- Leader/Mentor Guide
- Group Leader's Packet (visual aids for steps 1-4)
- *Friendship Youth* (take-home papers with activity sheets)
- *Friendship Adult* (take-home papers with activity sheets)

Leader/Mentor Guide

This guide includes four session plans with directions for group meetings and one-on-one mentoring time. The first four steps in each of the session plans are the responsibility of the group leader; the last two steps are intended for the one-on-one mentor.

The fifth session in each unit is a review session. We encourage you to spend at least one session reviewing this unit before going on to the next one. Repetition will help your friends remember more of the lesson truths. Suggested activities develop the head, heart, and hand goals introduced in the first four sessions and often provide opportunities for friends and mentors to use their gifts to serve God and others. Group leaders and mentors will likely want to plan this session together.

In the back of each Leader/Mentor Guide, you'll find

- words and music for six of the suggested songs.
- directions for signing key words used in the session plans.
- photocopiable patterns for story visuals, crafts, and activities.
- reproducible transparency masters for litanies, and so on.

LEADER TIP

Each group leader and each mentor will need a copy of the Leader/Mentor Guide. In addition, you may wish to order the CD *God, Our Father (Old Testament)*, Disk 1. Available from Faith Alive Christian Resources, the CD contains instrumental accompaniment for all of the songs included in the Leader/Mentor Guides for units 1-3 (see also the Songs section on pp. 52-59).

Group Leader's Packet

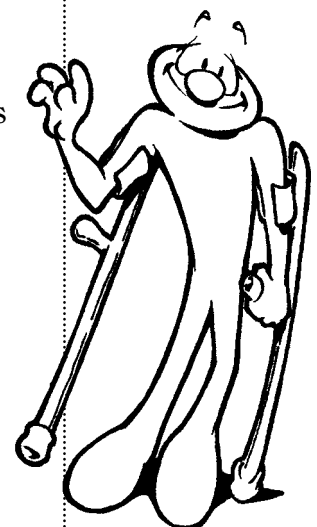
A variety of visual aids (story figures, posters, and so on) are included in a packet for the group leaders. These materials will be used for the group session activities (steps 1-4).

LEADER TIP

You'll want to order one Group Leader's Packet for yourself and one for mentors if they prefer to have their own set of story visuals, posters, and so on for the group session and the one-on-one mentoring session. (Friends with visual impairments and those who have difficulty focusing on the story may benefit from this.)

Friendship Youth and Friendship Adult

Take-home papers (four per unit) are designed to be used in the one-on-one mentoring sessions. The four-page papers usually contain the weekly Bible story, simply told and colorfully illustrated. Each paper also includes activities that reflect life situations appropriate for either youth or adults. Accompanying activity sheets are provided when needed to complete the activities in the paper.



LEADER TIP

Generally, we can assume that youth with mental impairments live at home with their families and attend school, probably in special education or inclusion programs. Some adults live at home; many others live in group homes or in supervised or independent housing. They may work at sheltered work sites or in the community. Both youth and adults enjoy participating in leisure and recreational activities just like other youth and adults their age. These unique life situations will be reflected in the separate youth and adult versions of the take-home papers. You'll want to order one set of the appropriate take-homes (youth or adult) for each friend and mentor.

A Promise to Experience

Ralph and Carol Honderd are the proud parents of Karyn, who has a mental impairment. Karyn was already a young adult when a Friendship program came to the Honderds' church. Ralph admits he was skeptical. His view now? "The Friendship program has helped transform our congregation." He describes changes in programs, worship, and individuals. He says, "The Friendship program is nothing less than a channel of grace. Get into this program, and you'll see God at work—I promise you."

That's our prayer for you! And as God works through you and your friends, let us know about your concerns as well as your victories. Contact us at

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God Made the World

Scripture

Genesis 1

Key Biblical Truth

Our great God made the whole world and everything in it from nothing.

Group Session Goals

Friends and mentors will

- 🗣️ recognize the greatness of God the Creator.
- 💡 praise our great God for making this wonderful world.

Mentoring Session Goals

Friends will

- 🗣️ review the story by completing at least one of the activities described in step 5.

- 🗣️ recite this memory verse:

In the beginning, God created [made] the heavens and the earth.

—Genesis 1:1, NIRV

- 🗣️ read selected verses from the creation story in Genesis 1.

- 💡 praise our great God for making this wonderful world.

- 🌟 pay special attention to one thing in God's world.

LEADER TIP

You may want to schedule a special orientation session with an opening time for introductions and singing, a tour of your facility, a group-building activity, and so on. Rather than trying to do all of the steps of a typical session, concentrate on making everyone feel welcome and ready to come back next time.

Focusing on God's Word

God made the world—that's the truth you'll be presenting to your friends in this session. Everything we see around us is created by God or made from materials created by God.

We cannot prove this; no one saw creation happen. But it's unlikely your friends will demand proof. It should be enough to tell them we know God made the world because God's Word tells us so: *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth* (Genesis 1: 1). We believe because *"We have faith. So we understand that everything was made when God commanded it. That's why we believe that what we see was not made out of what could be seen"* (Hebrews 11:3). We also believe because the Bible repeatedly emphasizes God's creative activity. (For a convincing account of God's creativity, read Job 38-41). Our God is a Creator God!

Imagine . . .

Imagine that you are Job—destitute, disabled, despairing, depressed, deserted. Then picture God answering your question, "Why me, Lord?" Notice that God answers your questions with questions (Job 38:2, 4, and so on, through chapter 41). Ahh! Finally you get it! *"[God], I know that you can do all things and that no plan of yours can be ruined"* (42:1). That's the message of creation you can share with your Friendship friends, who, along with you and their families, may be asking, "Why me, Lord?"

Let your mentoring today go beyond appreciation of nature or the facts of creation to worship of the God who is good and powerful and very wise and very strong. God can do things that no one else can do. *"God's voice thunders in wonderful ways. We'll never understand the great things he does"* (Job 37:5). There is no other being like our great God.

While the Bible is emphatic in its claim that God is the Creator, it says very little about the process God used. Genesis 1 summarizes into one chapter everything that happened at the beginning of time. In one respect, reading Genesis 1 may leave more questions than answers—we simply do not know exactly how God did it. But precise details aren't so important, especially for your friends. If some should ask more detailed questions, explain simply that you don't know exactly how it happened.

In describing how God made the world, the process of creation from the first day to the sixth, remember several things. First, God created the world in an orderly fashion. Creating the world was an immense task and had to be done in the right order. It wouldn't do, for example, to make fish before there was a sea for them to swim in or cows before there was grass for them to eat. So God did some planning. God decided what should be done first and did that. The next day God did something else. God knew exactly how much should be done in one day and went about each task in an orderly way.

Second, God the Creator worked hard. God

- *"separated"* (vv. 4, 6, 14).
- *"called"* (vv. 5, 8, 10).
- *"made"* (vv. 7, 16, 25, 26).
- *"put"* (v. 17).
- *"created"* (vv. 21, 27).
- *"blessed"* (vv. 22, 28).

For your friends, who have to work so hard to accomplish what comes quickly and easily to others, the knowledge that God worked and works hard may be encouraging. Jesus said, "My Father is always doing his work. He is working right up to this very day. I am working too."

Third, God was very pleased with creation. *"God saw everything he had made. And it was very good"* (v. 31). God was happy at the end of each day to sit back and look at what had been created. God was pleased because everything was well made. Your friends should be made aware that they also are part of God's good creation—and that God loves this world and the people in it very much.

Suggested Songs

The * indicates that the music is included in the back of this guide. The number in parentheses gives the order of the song on the CD, *God Our Father (Old Testament)*, Disk 1. SFL indicates that songs are from *Songs for LiFE*, available from Faith Alive Christian Resources.

- *"Circle of Friends" (CD 1)
- *"Come into God's Presence (CD 2)
- "God Is So Good" (SFL 207, CD 12)
- *"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" (CD 3)
- *"And God Said" (CD 4)
- *"Who Made Ocean, Earth, and Sky?" (CD 5)
- "He's Got the Whole World" (SFL 198)
- "My God Is So Great" (SFL 35)
- "This Is My Father's World" (SFL 95)

You may find it helpful to make transparencies of the music included in the back of this guide. (We've included addresses for obtaining permission to copy.) You'll note that we've included motions or signing for several of the songs along with the words and music.

LEADER TIP

Materials

- Digital camera (optional)
- Matching nametags (one set per friend/mentor pair), masking tape
- Extra set of nametags for "Hide and Seek" game (optional)
- Large candle in holder, matches (optional)
- Ingredients and containers for trail mix or materials for toy home (step 2)
- Fresh flowers or blooming plant
- Bible (New International Reader's Version)
- Large dark-colored backdrop (see Leader Tip, p. 13)
- Story visuals (group leader's packet)
- Large envelopes for story visuals (11 or more)
- Transparencies made from story visuals (optional)
- Overhead projector (optional)
- Large hanger and thin wire for mobile (optional)
- Strips of fabric or crepe paper, tape, rulers or paint sticks (optional)
- Photocopy of action rhyme or litany (see optional activities, p. 15)
- *Friendship Youth*, session 1 or *Friendship Adult*, session 1 (optional); bell or triangle (optional)

STEP 1: Greeting God and Each Other

Welcome

This is an exciting day for you and your friends! Make sure that you and your team of mentors are ready to greet each friend by name. Below are three suggestions for pairing mentors and friends in a way that will say, “You’re welcome here!”

LEADER TIP

If this is the very first session for your Friendship group, you’ll want to spend time establishing the routine and getting acquainted. You might want to bring a digital camera and assign someone to take pictures of each friend and mentor. Print copies for use throughout the year. (Adult friends and mentors will need pictures for an activity in session 2—see step 5, p. 27).



Nametag Match

Have matched sets of nametags ready for mentors and friends. (Make sure that each pair of tags is distinctive. For example, you might make all tags the same color, but vary the shapes so that each pair has tags uniquely shaped. Or make all the tags a uniform shape, but give each pair tags of different colors.) Distribute tags to mentors before the session begins. Ask mentors to greet their own friends as they arrive and give each one a nametag. Use this time to make friends feel at ease.

Nametag Hide and Seek

For a variation of the matching game, make a third set of tags and hide them in various places around the room. As friends arrive, have the mentors tape their own and their friends’ nametags on and invite their friends to help them search for the hidden tag that matches their own. When they find it, they can introduce themselves to each other (and to the group, if you like).

“Circle of Friends”

As friends arrive, have mentors tape their own and their friends’ nametags on. (Or try a nametag activity described above.) Invite everyone to form a large circle. With hands joined, have mentors lead the singing of the song “Circle of Friends” (pp. 53-54). When you sing, “Hey there, _____,” insert the mentor’s name. When you sing, “Thank the Lord, for _____,” insert the mentor’s friend’s name. Repeat these two phrases with the connecting question until everyone has been introduced.

We suggest you use “Circle of Friends” as your welcome song for this unit and as your theme song for this year. If possible, find a time to teach the song to your mentors ahead of time. Once you’ve sung it a few times, your friends will begin to join in. If your group is large, you may want to form two circles—or try singing the song seated in rows, if that’s how you usually gather for worship.

Praise and Worship

To set a tone of praise and worship, sing “Come into God’s Presence” (p. 55) and “God Is So Good.” Add stanzas like these or others that are particularly meaningful to your group:

God is so great . . .

God made the world . . .

God made us all . . .

God gives us friends . . .

If you have time, sing other favorite praise songs. Conclude your opening time with a brief prayer. To involve your friends in your prayer time and to help them look forward to this time in your opening routine, sing “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” (p. 56). Or light a large candle, dim the lights, or use some other way to quiet your group and prepare them to talk to God.

STEP 2: Preparing to Listen to God’s Story

During this time you’ll want to introduce your friends to this key biblical truth: Our great God made the world and everything in it from *nothing*. To confirm that only God can do that, first talk about how God makes things; then demonstrate how we human beings make something. (Chose one of the projects on page 12 or think of something similar to make.)

Show the group the flowers (or blooming plant) you’ve brought. Pass the flowers around and let everyone see and smell their loveliness. Take the petals apart and wonder who could make a flower. Wonder what it’s made of. Explain that only God can make a flower—and God doesn’t need a recipe or ingredients or building blocks. God made the world from *nothing*. The Bible—God’s Word—tells us so!

Open your Bible to the very beginning and read,

In the beginning, God created [made] the heavens and the earth.

—Genesis 1:1

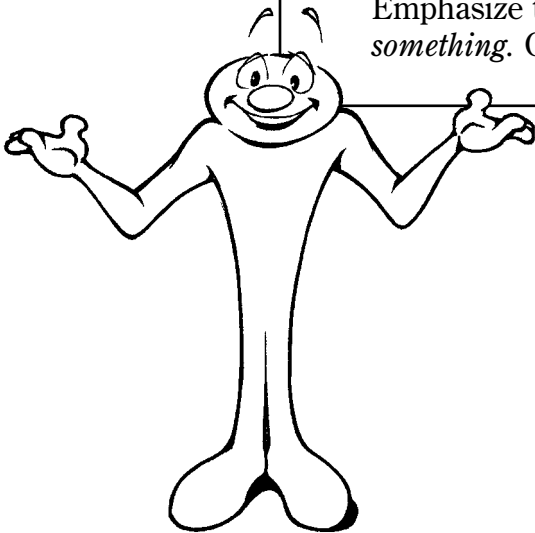
Repeat the verse slowly, and ask everyone to say it with you. (We’ve included signing for the memory verse on pages 62-63 in the back of this leader’s guide.) Wonder how it all happened as you invite the group to listen to God’s story.

TRAIL MIX

Bring ingredients for a trail mix (dry cereal, pretzels, raisins, chocolate chips, sunflower seeds, and so on) in separate containers and a large container to hold enough mix for the group. Give each container of ingredients to different friend/mentor pairs. (Ask the mentor to keep the container hidden until this point in the session.) Explain that you want to make a snack for the group but emphasize that you are unable to make a snack from *nothing*. Show the group the empty container as you ask each pair, one by one, to help you make a snack with *something*. Mix the ingredients and serve the trail mix in paper cups. Emphasize that you could only make *something* from *something*. Only God can make *something* from *nothing*.

TOY HOME

Bring Lego or Duplo bricks, Tinker Toys, Lincoln Logs, or similar building materials and toy people. Place a handful of building materials, doors, windows, and so on in Ziplock bags, and give each bag to different friend/mentor pairs. (Ask the mentors to keep the bags hidden until this point in the session.) Show the toy people to the group and suggest that these people need a home. You want to help them but you cannot build a home from *nothing*. Ask all the pairs to bring the materials all at once and then work together to build a home. (Don't worry about completing the home, but do try to build part of the frame and add a window and door so the group can see what the end result would be.) Emphasize that you could only make *something* from *something*. Only God can make *something* from *nothing*.



STEP 3: Listening to God's Story

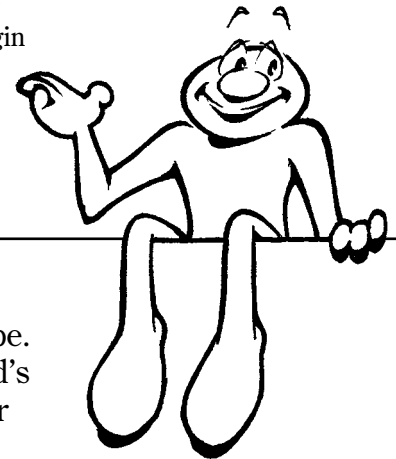
LEADER TIP

Ahead of time, securely tape or tack a large, dark-colored backdrop (posterboard, garbage bag, plastic table cloth, or fabric) to a wall or bulletin board in an area suited for telling the story. The dark background will represent the “*darkness over the surface of the ocean*” (Genesis 1:2) and will serve as the backdrop for adding the visuals. (You’ll need masking tape or tacks to attach the visuals to the backdrop.) Number the envelopes from 1 to 11 and place these corresponding visuals from your group leader’s packet inside:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ■ 1 lightburst | ■ 7 moon and stars |
| ■ 2 sky with clouds | ■ 8 fish and swimming creatures |
| ■ 3 large lake of water | ■ 9 birds |
| ■ 4 dry ground with mountains | ■ 10 animals |
| ■ 5 grass, plants, trees, flowers | ■ 11 Adam and Eve |
| ■ 6 sun | |

If you have more than 11 friends in your group, divide up the grass, plants, trees, flowers; fish; birds; and animals. Place them in separate envelopes numbered 5, 8, 9, or 10. If you have fewer than 11 friends, give the mentors envelopes too. You’ll want to save the mural for review, especially in session 3.

If your group is large, these visuals may be too small for everyone to see. You can copy the eleven sheets of visuals on a color copier and then make transparencies. (These services are readily available at most copy centers or office supply stores. You’ll note that we’ve granted permission to copy at the bottom of each visual.) To portray the darkness, begin telling the story with the overhead off and the room lights dimmed. As you describe the light, project the lightburst on a wall or screen; then proceed to tell the story, overlaying the transparencies so that you create a diorama of God’s creation. (You’ll probably want to practice this ahead of time.)



As you gather your group in your storytelling area, distribute the numbered envelopes so that each friend/mentor pair has one envelope. Tell the group that you will need their help to tell the story about God’s wonderful creation and that you will call their numbers when it’s their turn to help you make the visual.

You’ll find signing directions for *God* on page 62 in the back of this guide. To engage a friend who is nonverbal or hearing impaired, repeat this sign (or the pointing motion) throughout the story whenever God’s name is mentioned.

To hold their attention, invite group members to echo the phrase “My world is very good” each time you say it. Use the signing directions on page 61 to include friends who are nonverbal or hearing impaired.

The story follows:

In the beginning, before God (**point up or sign**) made our world, there was *nothing* (**shake head**)—no bright sun, no twinkling stars, no shining moon, no trees, no flowers, no people. Everything was dark. (**Point to dark backdrop**.) There was *nothing* except God.

Then God came to that quiet darkness. And just by talking, God changed the darkness into brightness. **(Call for envelope 1 and have the team place the lightburst on the backdrop.)** “Let there be light,” God said. And there was light! God separated the light from the darkness. **(Move the lightburst off to one side on the backdrop, and touch the remaining dark surface.)** God called the light day. God called the darkness night. God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day one. **(Hold up one finger.)**

Then God spoke again: “Let there be sky above” **(call for envelope 2 and have the team place the sky with clouds on the backdrop)** “and water down below.” **(Call for envelope 3 and have the team place the lake on the backdrop.)** God looked at the sky above and the water below **(touch each visual and move them if necessary to show above and below)** and God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day two. **(Hold up two fingers.)**

Then God looked at the world. God saw that the land and the water were muddy and mixed together so God said, “Let the ground be dry and separated from the water.”

Just like that **(snap fingers)**, some of the water became huge oceans and sparkling rivers and lakes **(point to the lake)**. And between the oceans and rivers and lakes, God made dry places. **(Call for envelope 4 and have the team place the dry ground with mountains on the backdrop.)** God made fields and mountains. Then God said, “Let green grass and plants and trees and flowers of every color cover the dry ground.” **(Call for envelope 5 and have the team place the grass, plants, trees, and flowers on the backdrop.)** God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day three. **(Hold up three fingers.)**

Then God looked at the big blue sky **(point to sky)**, and God said, “Let there be lights in the sky.” **(Call for envelope 6 and have the team place the sun near the sky on the backdrop.)** God made the sun to shine over the day, and God made the moon and stars to shine over the night. **(Call for envelope 7 and have the team place the moon and stars near the sky on the backdrop.)** Our great God made two big shining lights—the sun and the moon—and millions of tiny twinkling stars. God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day four. **(Hold up four fingers.)**

But there was still room for more in God’s big beautiful world, so God filled up the sky and the waters. **(Point to the sky and lake.)** God said, “Let the waters be filled with fish and every swimming creature.” **(Call for envelope 8 and have the team place the fish over the lake.)** Then God said, “Let every kind of bird that flies fill the sky.” **(Call for envelope 9 and have the team place the birds over the sky.)** God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day five. **(Hold up five fingers.)**

The waters and the sky were filled with creatures, but there was still room for more in God’s big beautiful world. God spoke again and said, “Let the

land be filled with every kind of animal.” **(Call for envelope 10 and have the team place the animals over the dry ground with mountains on the backdrop.)** God made tigers and zebras and cats and dogs and elephants and monkeys and cows and sheep—and animals of every kind. God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)**

God’s world was getting full, but God still wanted to make one more thing—people! **(Call for envelope 11 and have the team place the people on the backdrop.)** God made Adam and Eve, the very first people—the most wonderful part of God’s whole creation. God looked at all of creation and said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day six. **(Hold up six fingers.)**

The next day God rested. God’s creation was complete. God said, “My world is very good.” **(Echo.)** It was day seven. **(Hold up seven fingers.)**

Optional Way to Tell the Story

Rather than designing a mural to tell the story, you could make a mobile of the story visuals. Use a large hanger and thin wire to make the mobile. Involve friends and mentors as directed in the story script, and be ready to help attach each piece to the hanger with the thin wire. Hang the mobile where you can use it for review, especially during session 3.

STEP 4: Reflecting on God’s Story

Spend a few minutes reviewing the creation story with your group. We suggest you teach your group the echo song “And God Said” (p. 57). Sing the leader’s part yourself (or ask someone with a strong voice to sing this part). Have the mentors and their friends sing the opening phrase with you and then sing the echo parts.

To involve your friends who are hearing impaired or nonverbal, provide strips of cloth or crepe paper (white for light; blue for sky and seas; green for land; yellow for the sun, moon, and stars; orange for fish; red for birds; brown for animals; black/white/brown/yellow/red for humans) for them to wave. (Add stickers—sun, stars, fish, and so on—to the streamers if you wish.) Give each friend a “pompom” of all the colors (tape short streamers to a rule or paint stick), or give individuals one or more colors to wave as the word that each color symbolizes is sung. Collect the streamers to use again next week.

LEADER TIP

Optional Step 4 Activities

- Use the action rhyme “God Made the World” (p. 73) instead of or along with the song suggested in step 4. You will need to practice the rhyme, along with the motions, so that you can lead the group without depending on the paper. Encourage mentors to refer to the words and actions in their copy of *Friendship Youth* (session 1, p. 1). Suggest that they use the hand-over-hand technique if their friends can’t do the motions by themselves. (Place your hand over your friend’s hand as you do the motions.)

- Or use the litany “God Made the World,” particularly if your group consists mainly of older friends. You’ll note we’ve replaced the motions in the youth version with the phrase: “God’s world is very good” (see signing directions on p. 61). Read the leader’s part (or ask a friend who is a good reader to read the leader’s part from *Friendship Adult*, session 1, p. 1) and have friends and mentors repeat the response. (You could use a bell or triangle to signal when it’s time for the response.)
- Another option is to sing “Who Made Ocean, Earth, and Sky?” (p. 58). Sing the questions as a solo part or as a group. Teach your entire group to sign the response “God, our loving Father” (signing directions on p. 58).

Mentoring Session for Youth or Adults

Materials for Youth

- *Friendship Youth*, session 1
- Sticker activity sheet, session 1
- Pen, pencil, or marker
- Highlighter

Materials for Adults

- *Friendship Adult*, session 1
- Puzzle activity sheets A and B, session 1
- Scissors
- Large envelope
- Pen, pencil, or marker
- Highlighter

YOUTH

ADULTS

STEP 5: Living into God’s Story

When you have settled in your meeting place, explain to your friend that you will work together here each week. And together you will learn more about God and what the Bible tells us about God. Give your friend his take-home paper and spend a few minutes looking at it together.

Make sure he understands that it is his to use and to take home after your time together.

Mentor Helpline

When deciding how to review the Bible story, ask simple questions first, then try the more difficult ones only if your friend is able to respond. Use the hand-over-hand technique to help with hands-on activities; recite the memory verse and read to your friend if he is not able to memorize or read.

Review

Flatten the take-home paper so that pages 1 and 4 are open. Use the illustration there as a focal point for your review of the Bible story.

Questions/Discussion Starters (Youth and Adult)

- Did God make the world?
- Did God make the sun and moon?
- Did God make everything?

- Name or point to other things that God made.
- Tell what God’s creation shows us about God.
- Explain what it means to *create*.
- Describe *how* God created the world.

Sticker Matching (Youth)

Give your friend the sticker activity sheet and look at each picture as you talk about the things God made. Help him turn his take-home paper over so that pages 2 and 3 are showing. Invite to him cut out and match the sticker shapes to the shapes in the paper as you talk about the order of creation. Say, “On day one . . .” and let your friend tell you what God made. Use the hand-over-hand technique as necessary to guide the placement of the stickers.

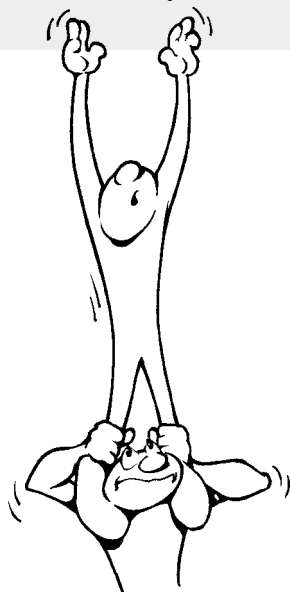
Puzzle Sequencing (Adult)

Give your friend the two puzzle activity sheets for session 1. Explain that the puzzle pieces show what God made on each day of creation. Look at it carefully together, describing each piece and the part of God’s creation that it represents. Let your friend describe what he sees in each picture.

Help your friend cut out the puzzle pieces and the background circle piece. Ask your friend to mix them all up on the table. Then challenge him to fit the pieces over the outlined pieces on the large circle in the order of creation. As you reassemble the pieces, talk about each piece and the part of creation it pictures. Emphasize the greatness and goodness of God that shows itself in each created wonder. When you have finished the activity, give your student a large manila envelope to keep his puzzle pieces in. Encourage him to use the puzzle at home to show the story of creation to his family or friends.

Mentor Helpline

The shape of each puzzle piece is outlined on the large circle background piece. The puzzle pieces have also been coded with dots and numbers to help your friend sequence correctly. If your friend is visually impaired, outline the puzzle pieces and the shapes on the background circle with heavy cord or simply with an outline of glue.



Mentor Helpline

If your friend is nonverbal, teach him to sign the memory verse as shown on pages 62-63 in the back of this guide. If your friend is enthusiastic and eager to memorize, you may wish to introduce some or all of this passage at some point during this unit:

The heavens were made when the Lord commanded it to happen. All of the stars were created by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together. He puts the oceans in their places. Let the whole earth have respect for the Lord. Let all of the people in the world honor him.

—Psalm 33:6-9

Recite (Youth and Adult)

Turn to page 4 of the take-home paper and read the memory verse to your friend. Explain that *create* means to make from nothing—just what God did when God made the world. Ask your friend to repeat the word a time or two. Then spend a few minutes memorizing the verse together.

Read (Youth and Adult)

Help your friend find Genesis 1 in the Bible. (Remind him that the book of Genesis is at the very beginning of the Bible.) Read selected verses to him as you underline them with a highlighter.

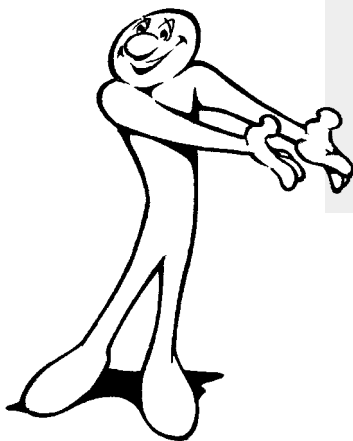
If your friend can read, either take turns reading about the individual days of creation or select a few key verses for your student to read. You might also ask him to match his puzzle pieces to the verses that tell about each day of creation. After you have finished the chapter, review the order of the days of creation together.

Optional Reading Activity (Youth)

If your friend has a hard time following the detailed story in the Bible, read the rhyme in the take-home paper and ask your friend to do the motions with you. (Use the hand-over-hand technique, if necessary.) If your friend can read, let him read the rhyme and then do the actions together.

Optional Reading Activity (Adult)

If your friend has a hard time following the detailed story in the Bible, read the litany in the take-home paper and ask your friend to say the response (or sign it as shown on p. 61 in the back of this leader's guide). If your friend can read, let him read the leader's part and then say the response together.



STEP 6: Growing from God's Story

Spend a few minutes focusing right now on one thing in creation you can see from a window or on a brief walk. Talk together about how wonderfully God made each rock, plant, or animal. Invite your friend to bring one or two things to talk about next time.

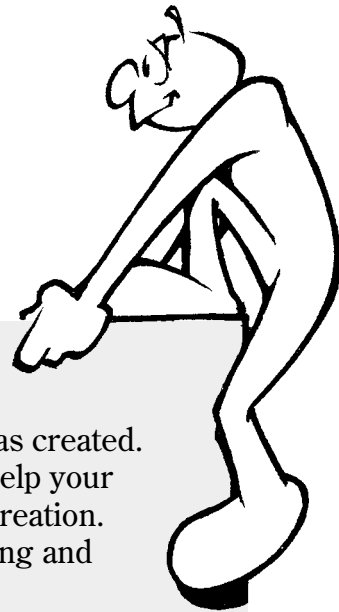
My Favorite Thing (Youth)

End your session by talking together about things we can enjoy in the beautiful world God has created. Use the front and back pages of the take-home paper to help your friend think about some things he enjoys about creation. Talk about the animals, fish, birds, plants, and so on. Ask your friend to circle the picture that shows his favorite part of God's world. Be sure to point out which picture represents your favorite part. Conclude with a prayer of praise and thanks to God for creation, especially for the things you and your friend enjoy the most.

My Favorite Way (Adult)

End your session by talking together about things we can enjoy in the beautiful world God has created. Use the inside pages of the take-home paper to help your friend think about some things he enjoys about creation. Talk about what the person in each picture is doing and what part of God's creation each one is enjoying.

Ask your friend to circle the picture that shows his favorite way of enjoying part of God's world. Be sure to point out which picture represents your favorite too. Conclude with a prayer of praise and thanks to God for creation, especially for the things you and your friend enjoy the most.





God made the sun to shine so bright.
(Make large circle with arms.)

God made the moon to cheer the night.
(Make smaller circle with hands.)

The stars that sparkle in the sky,
(wiggle fingers in the air)

the clouds that float away up high,
(wave hands in the air)

birds that fly,
(flap arms)

fish that swim—
(make swimming motion with arms)

all these things were made by him.
(Stretch arms outward.)

God made the trees that reach so tall.
(Stand tall and stretch arms.)

God made the bugs and flowers small.
(Cup fingers over each other.)

Pattering rain and gentle snow,
(wiggle fingers as arms move down)

breezy, whispery winds that blow,
(move arms from one side to the other)

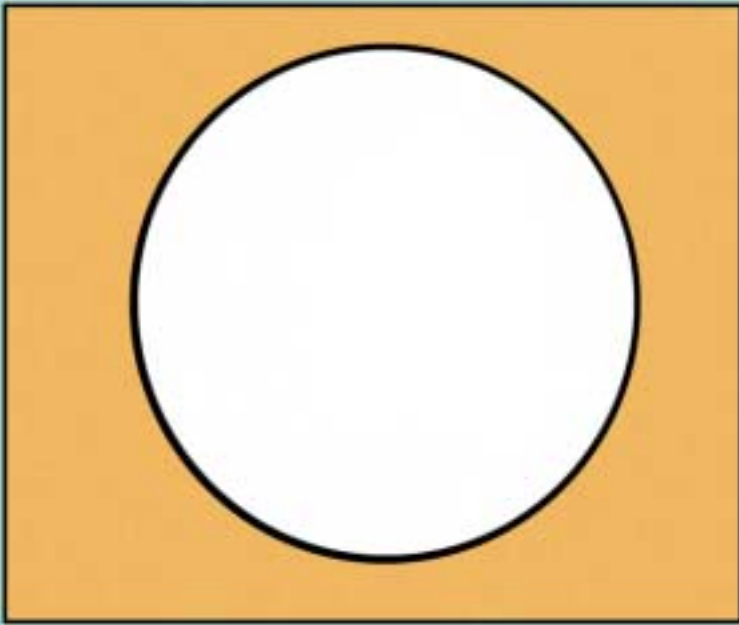
animals with striped and spotted fur—
(cross arms and rub hands over arms)

God's world was very good for sure!
(Point up or sign "God.")

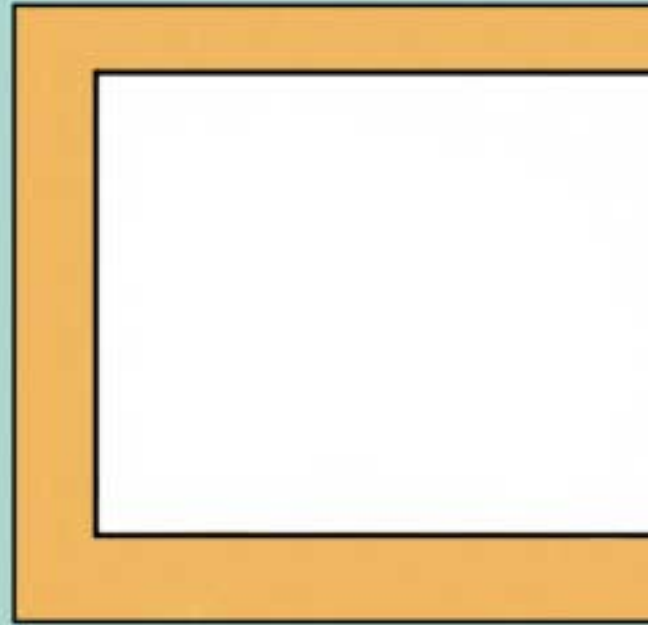
And this is the best of all we see:
(stretch arms out to touch each other)

God made you and God made me.
(Point to someone else and to self.)

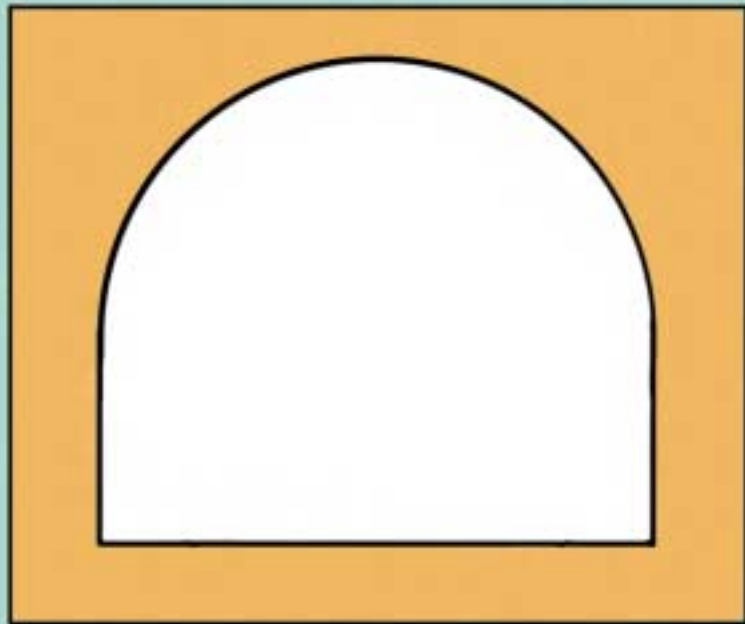
God Made . . .



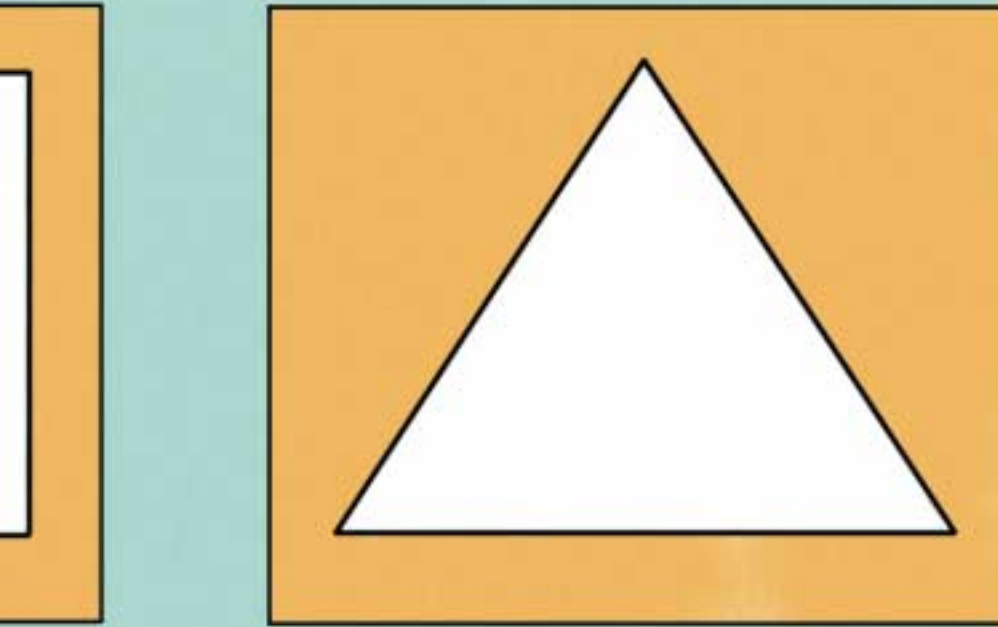
God made . . . on the very first day.



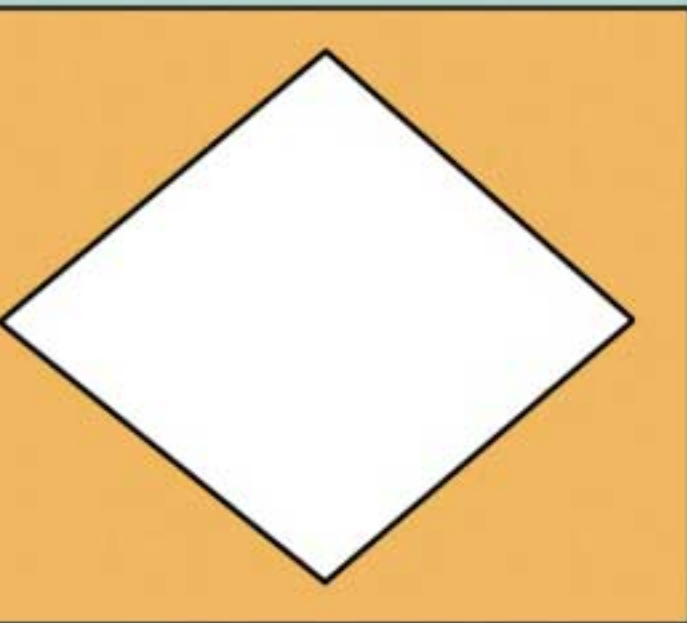
God made . . . on day 2.



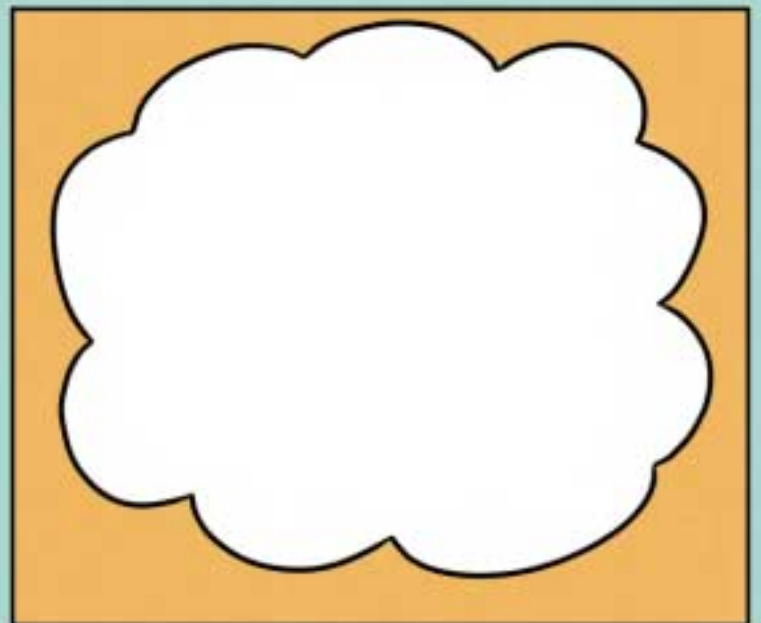
Then, on day 4, God made . . .



On day 3, God made . . .



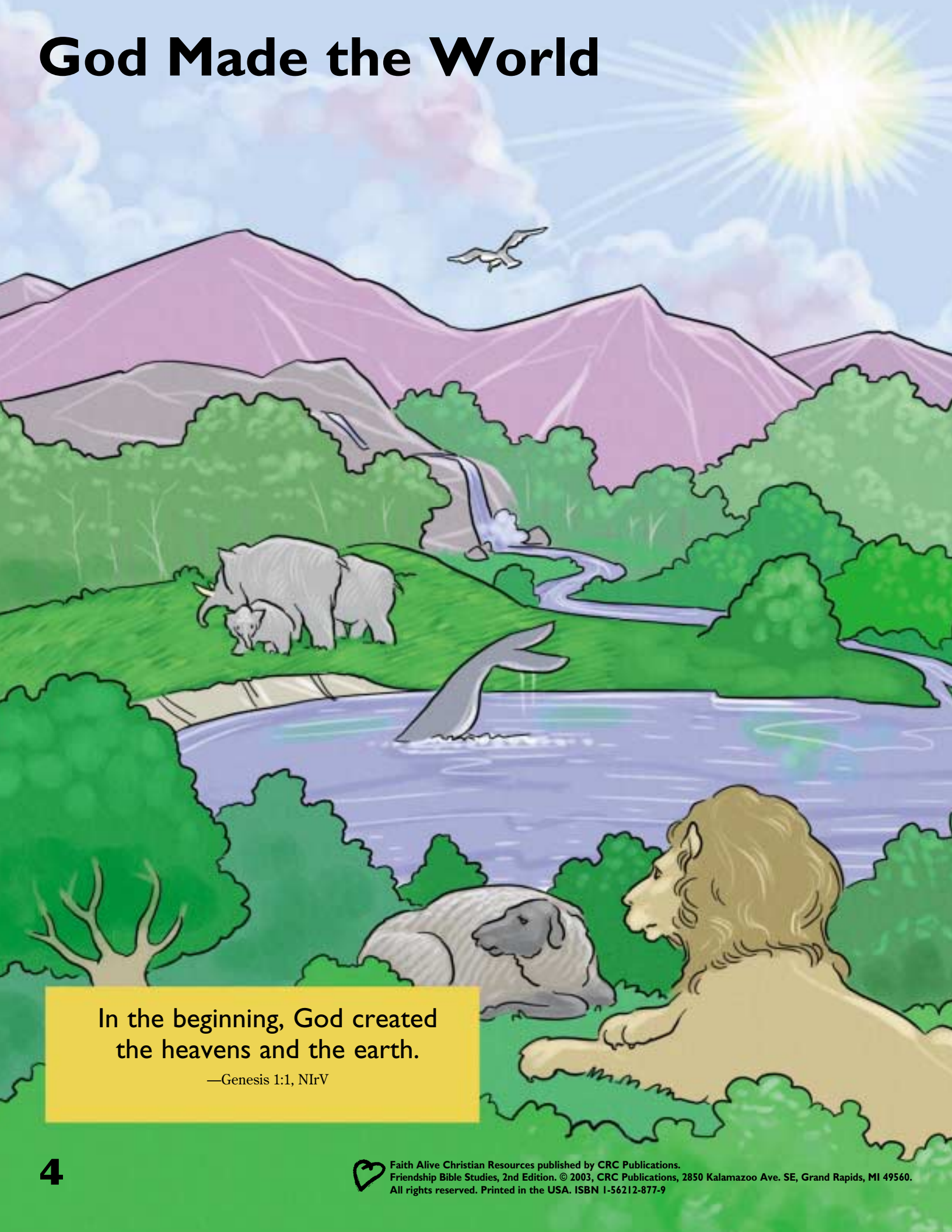
And on day 5, God made . . .



Last of all, on day 6, God made . . .

God's world was very good!

God Made the World



In the beginning, God created
the heavens and the earth.

—Genesis 1:1, NIV





Reader: God made the sun to shine so bright.

Response: God's world is very good.

Reader: God made the moon to cheer the night,
the stars that sparkle in the sky,
the clouds that float away up high,
birds that fly,
fish that swim—
all these things were made by him.

Response: God's world is very good.

Reader: God made the trees that reach so tall.

Response: God's world is very good.

Reader: God made the bugs and flowers small,
pattering rain and gentle snow,
breezy, whispery winds that blow,
animals with striped and spotted fur—
God's world was very good for sure!

Response: God's world is very good.

Reader: And this is the best of all we see:
God made you and God made me.

Response: God's world is very good.

Enjoy God's World!

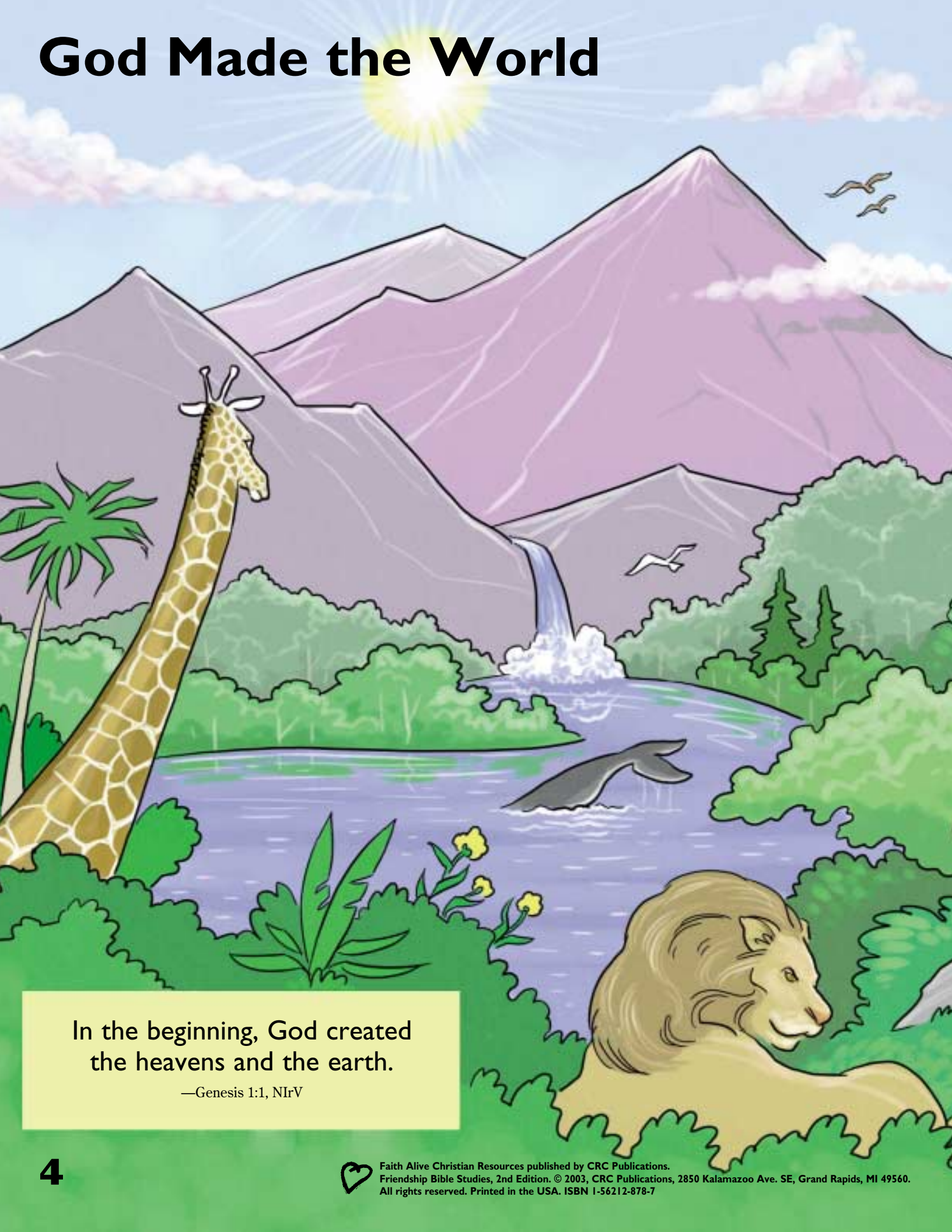


Which pictures show things you enjoy? Circle



Circle the one that is your favorite.

God Made the World



In the beginning, God created
the heavens and the earth.

—Genesis 1:1, NIV

