



# The Same Spirit

**Goal:** To consider the gifts of the Spirit and imagine how we can use them for the common good.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In 1 Corinthians 12

Paul speaks about “spiritual gifts” given to all Christians. While there are “different spiritual gifts,” it is the same Spirit who gives them. There are “different ministries,” but the same Lord gives them. There are “different activities,” but it is “the same God who produces all of them in everyone” (vv. 4–6, CEB). It is God who gives all good gifts, to everyone in the church.

What use is to be made of the spiritual gifts the church is given? Paul said, “A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good” (v. 7, CEB). This gives direction for all of us. We need to understand the gifts we have been given and to imagine how they can be used for the good of all persons. The gifts mentioned by Paul are speaking wisely, speaking with knowledge, faith, healing, working miracles, prophecy, and gifts of interpretation. These open our imaginations to see our gifts—in proclaiming, teaching, caring, conveying faith, help in healing others, speaking God’s word, and helping others in understanding. Whatever gifts the Spirit gives us can be used for ministry and helping others. Let us receive God’s grace with gratitude!

### . . . In Your Children’s Experiences

Who doesn’t love a gift? Children obviously know about tangible gifts and will be easily able to tell about a favorite gift they have given or received. Help them go deeper and name a gift they have that can be used by God. Or ask children to help name gifts other children have. Be prepared for both humorous and serious responses. It’s OK to laugh about a silly gift. God seems to be able to use our gifts for good work in helping others. Thanks be to God for the mysterious ways the Spirit is at work in the lives of our children.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

The challenge with this story about Paul and gifts is that they are abstract, which means you will need to help younger children make connections with them in more visible ways. Like Paul, you can help all the children in your group name a gift they have that can be used by God in helping other people. Be aware of children who might not be able to think of a gift they have, and be ready to help them think of one. As you prepare to teach this story, be in prayer for each child, thinking of the gifts they have.

*Help me, O God, to be a fitting member of your church.  
In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.*



## Supplies

### Music & Melodies

[bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies](http://bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies)

### Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 7, 7a, 17, 19

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

audio stories (optional)  
(see p. vii)

internet-connected  
device

candle

green cloth

copies of **Grace Notes (GN) 1**

*The Story of And: The Little Word That Changed the World* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

geometric shapes cut from different colors of paper: circle, triangle, square, rectangle, cylinder, oval, and line (cut a very thin rectangle or use a pipe cleaner for a line)

## Responding

### Claiming

Interlocking toy bricks (ten or more of a color for each child)

### Praying SCM 7b

### Offering

copies of **GN 2**; tissue paper or cotton; small gift, such as candy or stickers

### Extra

copies of **GN 3**

## GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Post **SCM i-ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Wrap a gift box (lid and box separately) with gift wrap so it can be opened without unwrapping.

Obtain *The Story of AND: The Little Word That Changed the World* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2019).

“Claiming God’s Grace” and “Offering God’s Grace” require more prep.

### Welcoming and Preparing **LG**

Play “God Gives Us a Gift (Dios nos da un regalo)” as the children arrive. Welcome each child with, “Grace and peace to you!” Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite the children to help prepare the worship space. On a table, place a green cloth, a candle, and a Bible.

Ask a volunteer to cut out the figures (hand, foot, mouth, and eyes) from **SCM 7a**, and include these figures and the gift box on the table.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two children prepare to lead today’s singing. Today’s Scripture reading is quite long. Decide if you would like to have volunteers read it aloud or read the story on **SCM 7**. Invite several volunteers to practice the reading.

Hand out copies of **GN 1** and invite the children to think about a special gift they have received or given. Encourage them to draw that gift in the box. Add the gifts that they draw to the worship space.

### Singing

Invite the children to close their eyes and listen to “God Gives Us a Gift (Dios nos da un regalo).” Tell the children to imagine that God is singing the song to us. Ask: “What are some of the gifts that God gives us?” This is sung in both English and Spanish. Use **SCM 17** to sing the song together.

### Praying **C**

Turn on the candle as a reminder of God’s presence with us through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Invite the children to continue thinking about God’s good gifts as they pray a “popcorn prayer.” Use the following prayer, prompting the children to name a gift God gives and echoing your closing words giving thanks to God.

Loving God, we thank you for the many gifts you give us each day in our lives. We thank you for . . .

Thank you, God! Amen. /



If children are reluctant to share, assure them that their gifts will be included as well.

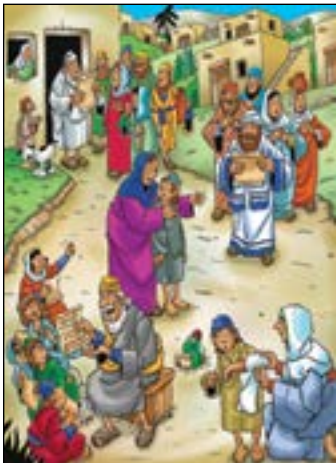
### Preparing to Hear the Story C

Invite the children to show their drawings on **GN 1** and tell the group about the gift they remember giving or receiving. Ask:

- ▼ What was special about the gift you received or you gave?
- ▼ Why was the gift you received perfect for you or the gift you gave perfect for the person who received it?

Tell the children that today's Scripture talks about gifts that are harder to see but are just as special.

Tell the children that Paul wrote letters to the believers in the places he visited to help them understand God better. Today's story is from a letter delivered to the church in Corinth. Explain that the believers in Corinth were having some problems and disagreements. Paul wanted to help them understand how each of them was an important member of the faith community and had been given gifts to help the community.



### Hearing the Story LG F C

Ask a child to open the Bible to 1 Corinthians 12. Have volunteers read the chapter or **SCM 7**. Conclude the reading by saying, "Word of wisdom, Word of grace," and prompt the children to respond, saying, "Thanks be to God."

Form four groups and give each group one of the body parts from **SCM 7a** (hand, foot, mouth, and eyes) or act together as one group for each body part. Tell the children that when you read about their assigned body part, that group must form a tableau, or still life picture, of how that part may be used for the good of the faith community. For example, feet may run to get help or march for justice.

Read **SCM 7**, pausing after each body part is mentioned so that the children may form their tableaux and hold in place for several seconds.

### Reflecting on God's Grace C

Option 1: Read *The Story of And: The Little Word That Changed the World* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. Place geometric shapes on a table in front of all, and invite the children to take two or more shapes to make something new. Recall that in the story, AND points out how the shapes can create something that makes a community when they are together. Wonder together how this story reflects Paul's letter to the Corinthians and how we might be like AND in our lives.

- ▼ I wonder, "How can we be like AND, using our different gifts together to do what God wants us to do?"
- ▼ What might that look like in our group?



Option 2: Share an example of how you are like a certain part of the body, a special gift God has given you, and how you use it with other church members.

- ▼ I wonder, “What part of the body are you? Is anyone like an elbow or knee joint? Neck? Ears? Heart? Ribs?”
- ▼ Why are you like a certain part?

Affirm that each of us has been given gifts. Sometimes we discover gifts that we didn’t even know we had!

### Singing



Sing “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”—**SCM 19**. Allow the children to come up with movements to go with the song. Encourage the children to use their whole bodies to celebrate.

Turn off the candle.

## RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.



### Claiming God’s Grace



Remind the children that Paul’s letter to the Corinthians also gives us a message about how all our gifts can work together for the common good of the community.

Give each child ten or more interlocking toy bricks of the same color (all red for one child, all yellow for another child, and so forth), and invite them to make any sort of structure or figure they would like. After they have finished, have each of the children show their creation.

Then invite the children to get into pairs or triads with children who have different colored bricks. Have them build a new structure together, integrating their bricks. Have the groups show their new creations.

Now invite all the children to build one structure together with all the bricks. Comment that each person and their gifts is a part of the new creation.

Engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- ▼ How hard or easy was it to share your bricks with one or two other people? With the whole group?
- ▼ How is this new structure like our faith community?
- ▼ How do you see your gifts contributing to the community?

Lead the children by affirming together, “We will use all our gifts to serve God.”



- F** *Sometimes children protest that they're being treated unfairly when it may be only that they're not getting what they want. When self-interest overrides actually trying to be fair, ask them to flip the situation and look at it from the other person's perspective.*

### Celebrating God's Grace LG

Play a game to affirm gifts in others. Pull chairs into a circle, with space to move around in the middle. Introduce the game from the middle of the circle, and then participate with the group. Use the following directions to play the game:

- ▼ The person in the middle will say "I know someone who . . ." and then name a gift or characteristic that at least one child in the group has, such as "can play an instrument," or "likes to help others," and so on.
- ▼ All the children for whom the statement is true stand up and find another open chair.
- ▼ Whoever is left standing when all have moved is the new leader.

Play several rounds, and remark about how many good gifts all of the children have.

### Praying God's Grace MS LG A

Form four groups or act as one group together for each body part. Give each group one of the figures from **SCM 7b**. Have them talk about all the ways people could use the part of the body they received (skin, bones, ears, heart) to serve God. Invite them to create a skit or several tableau scenes to act out and share with the group.

After the skits or tableaux, invite the children to stand and have a full-body prayer. Invite the children to take turns praying as they name and point to a part and how it can serve God. Children may name parts mentioned previously or come up with new ideas.

Thank you, God, for [body part] that can [action] you.  
For our bodies, and the gift of praising you, we give you  
thanks! Amen.



### Offering God's Grace

Create a gift box to give to others to celebrate their gifts to the faith community. Hand out copies of **GN 2**. Use the following directions to make the box:

- ▼ Write the name of a person and the gift they have that helps God's work on the blank side of the gift box pattern.
- ▼ Decorate the boxes with crayons or markers.
- ▼ Cut along the solid black lines.
- ▼ Fold the pillow box pattern on the dashed lines.



- ▼ Tape the narrow tab marked A to the side marked B. The sides will fold in along the curved marks to make an assembled box.
- ▼ Read the verse printed on the box together.

Invite the children to tuck a piece of tissue paper or some cotton down into their boxes and add a small gift inside, such as a piece of candy or a sticker. Encourage the children to take these little presents to the people named in celebration of their gifts, offered to God’s world.

### Extra Activity



Distribute copies of **GN 3** and colored pencils. Point out the list in the center of the page. Ask if anyone can guess what these items may have in common. If the children do not come to it, point out that the page is a list of jobs that they can do to help in church.

Allow time for the children to make connections between the jobs and the parts of the body that are used to do each job. Encourage creativity—use different colors and lines (squiggly, dashed, or zig-zag), draw arrows, and use other ways to connect a job to the body parts.

Discuss how all of our gifts are needed to help the church.

## LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Work together to clean up the worship space.

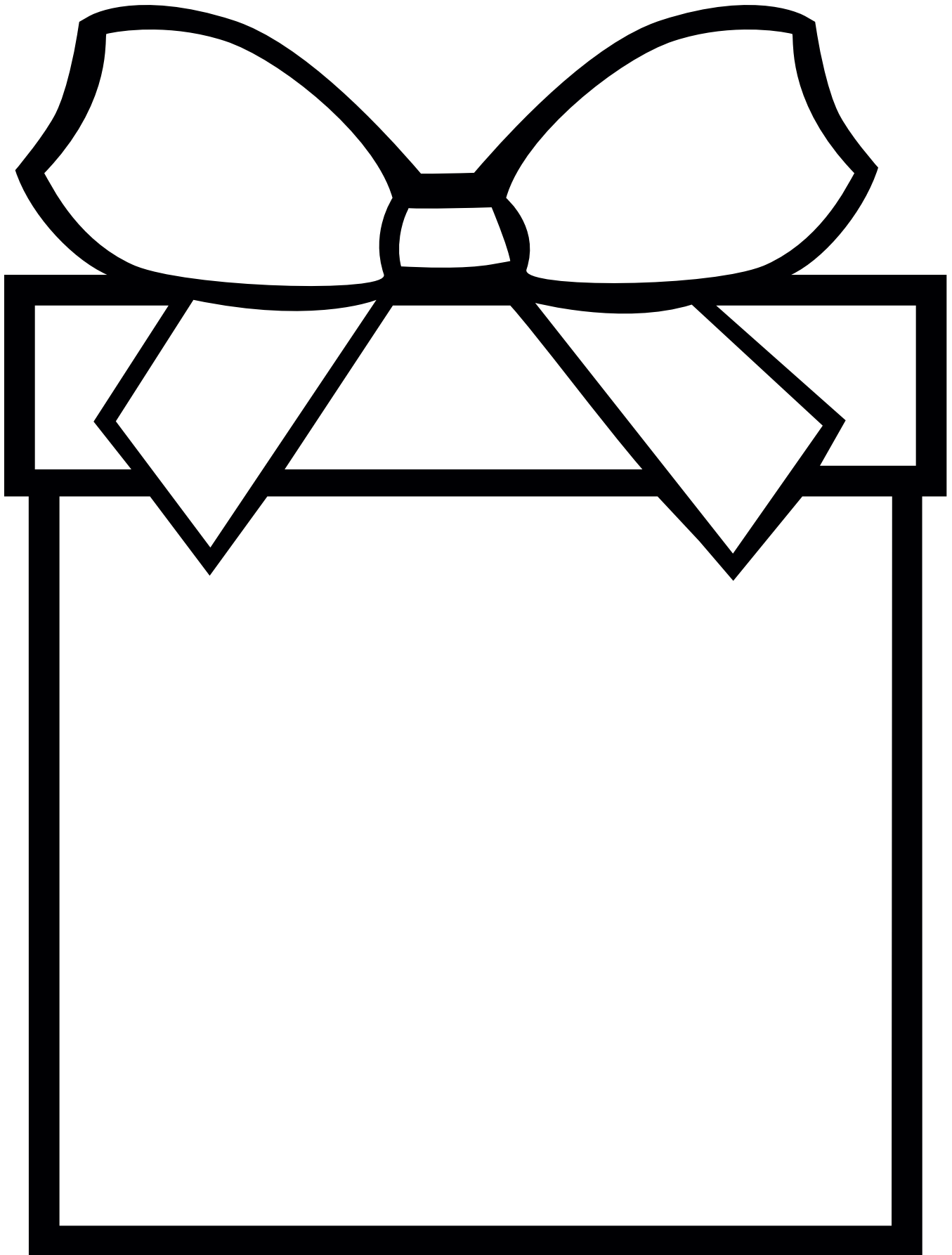
Invite the children to consider how many different gifts God has given God’s people through the Spirit. Welcome all of the gifts they name. Gather in a circle and conclude with a motion prayer:

Dear God, with our whole bodies (*wiggle whole body*)  
we thank you. (*clap hands*)  
For the special part we have (*point to a body part*)  
in the body of Christ, your church, (*open arms wide*)  
we thank you. (*clap hands*)  
For joining us together (*hold hands together*)  
and making us one, (*walk to the center, raising hands*)  
we thank you. (*clap hands*)  
We all say, “Amen.” **Amen.**

Send the children with this blessing, “(Name), you are an important part of the body of Christ. Go with God’s grace.”

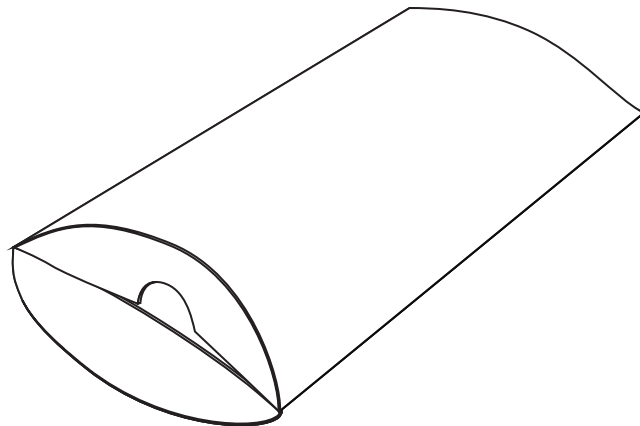
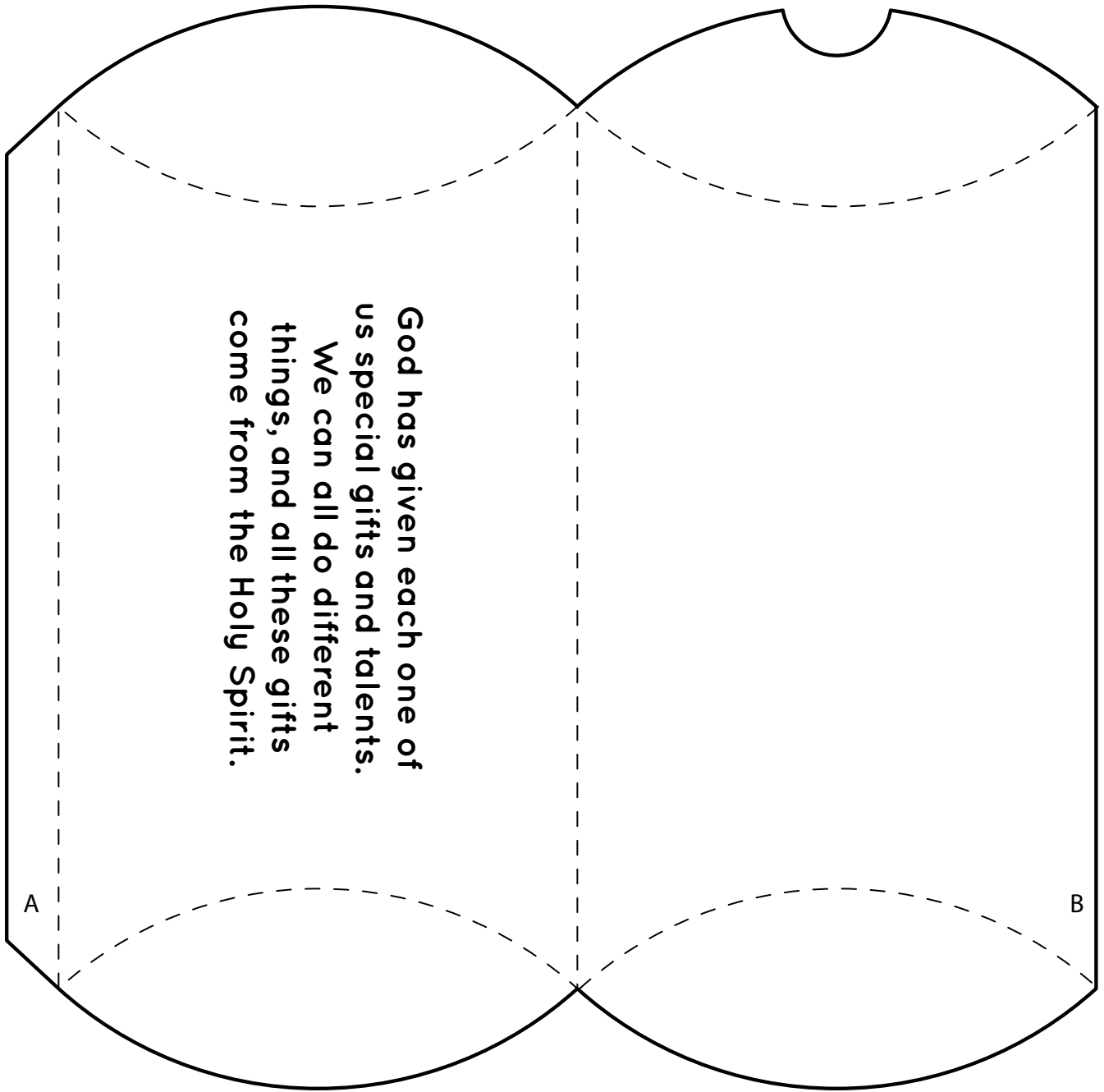


Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads), where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

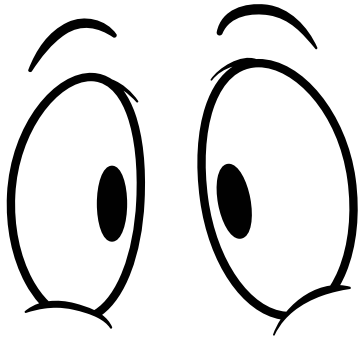












take up the offering  
read the Scripture  
count the offering  
hold the door open for someone  
pass out bulletins  
straighten the hymnals  
light the candles  
sing in the choir  
arrange the chairs  
serve as greeter  
ring the bell  
smile at people

