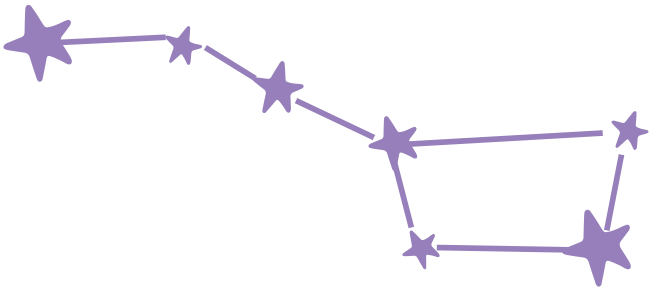
IGNITE PARENTING

Shoot for the Stars

A FAITH AND FAMILY EVENT

LEADER OVERVIEW



Family Faith Events are a way to help parents and their kids engage in memorable moments together as well as empower parents to openly discuss their faith and values with their kids. By infusing fun, worship, prayer, and intergenerational relationship-building activities into these events, parents will feel your support as they navigate passing down their Christian faith to their kids. Through this event, you will equip parents to take an active role in the spiritual development of their kids by giving them ideas, tips, and guided practice at having conversations with their kids that center around a spiritual truth.

This *Shoot for the Stars* event creates a fun atmosphere for families as they work together to explore the beauty and wonder of stars and constellations. Along the way, parents will be guided to interact with their kids through Parent Prompts.

After creating a tool to learn more about stars and constellations, family discipleship time will reveal a spiritual truth in a way that kids of all ages can understand. At this event, you'll talk about how the Creator of the universe wants a personal relationship with us. Then the **Faith at Home Page** invites parents to continue having regular conversations with their kids at home about their faith and values.

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PREPARING FOR THE EVENT

Who's Invited?

The goal of this event is to help parents and caregivers take an active role in the spiritual development of the kids in their lives. It's easily adaptable to grandparents and grandkids, or any adult who is in a discipleship role with a kid or youth. Ideally, adults who attend this event should understand the importance of God's role in their lives and recognize their need for a Savior.

Setting

This event is designed to take place in any meeting space large enough to accommodate participants sitting at tables as families to do the activities that are outlined in this *Event Guide*.

Event Host

Determine who will be the primary host. This individual will lead this event as outlined in this guide. The Welcome and opening prayer are great ways to include your lead pastor in the event.

Promotion

Use the provided media graphics to promote this event in your kids, youth, and adult services as well as through social media and email communication.

Media

Themed media graphics are provided to allow you to create a visual presentation for this event. Graphics include a 5-minute countdown, title slide, motion graphics, and more!

Volunteer Roles

This event is uniquely designed to require minimal volunteers. Consider recruiting volunteers from small groups and Sunday School classes, senior adult ministry, and/or youth group. Volunteers should be old enough to perform responsibilities with minimal supervision and should be background checked prior to the event to ensure safety for all who attend. Roles may include:

- ☐ purchasing and organizing the supplies
- ☐ event setup and teardown
- ☐ assistance with activities
- ☐ prayer team
- ☐ table mentors who can facilitate conversation between parents and kids as needed

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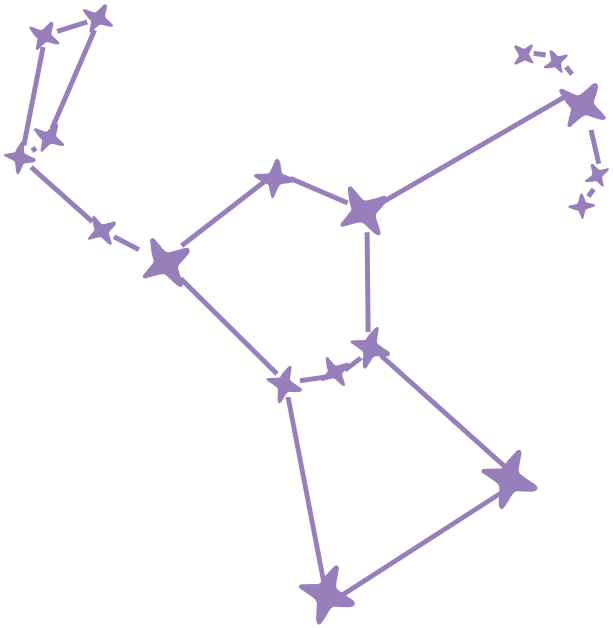
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ORDER OF EVENT

- ☐ **Welcome – 10 Minutes**
  Welcome participants, pray together, and introduce the faith focus of the event.

- ☐ **Family Activity Time – 20 Minutes**
  Guide families step-by-step through the event's activity, guiding parents to engage with their kids.

  - o Distribute supplies to participants.
  - o Play upbeat background music to bring energy to the event.
  - o Instruct volunteers to walk around and assist as needed.
  - o Encourage families to ask questions if they are confused.



- ☐ **Family Discipleship Time – 10 Minutes**
  Present a short teaching time with Parent Prompts incorporated so that parents can practice having conversations about spiritual truths with their kids.

  - o Have families sit together and ask them to give you their attention for this time.
  - o Encourage everyone to focus and try to refrain from conversation at the table and to avoid getting up during this time unless necessary.

- ☐ **Closing – 5 minutes**

  - o Close in corporate prayer and then ask parents and kids to pray together as a family unit.
  - o Encourage parents to review the **Parent and Caregiver Page** and at-home activities and Scripture.
  - o If your next event has already been scheduled, encourage parents to preregister for the next event as soon as possible.

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You will need

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ **Theme Slide**
- ☐ **Constellation Slides**
- ☐ **Bible Verses Slides**
- ☐ **Featured Bible Verse Slide**
- ☐ * Empty toilet paper rolls, 1 per person
- ☐ * White card stock
- ☐ **Projector Page,** 1 per person
- ☐ Masking tape or stapler, 1 per family
- ☐ Pushpins, 1 per person
- ☐ Scissors, 1 per person
- ☐ Flashlights with a single bulb, 1 per kid
- ☐ **Parent and Caregiver Page,** 1 per family
- ☐ **Faith at Home Page,** 1 per family
- ☐ Table covers, 1 per table

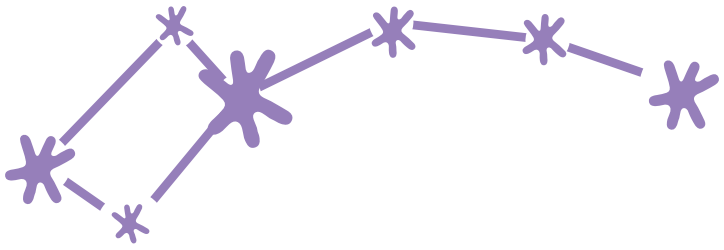
Getting ready

Days before the Event

- ☐ *If you can't get enough empty toilet paper rolls for everyone, print the **Projector Page** on white card stock to make the tubes, 1 or more per person.
- ☐ Read through this guide.
- ☐ Think about how you may need to adapt the event to best reach your group.
- ☐ Create a sample of the **Projector Page** activity.
- ☐ Recruit volunteers.
- ☐ Promote the event.
- ☐ Pray for the families who will attend.

Day of the Event

- ☐ Set up the room.
- ☐ Cover tables to prevent mess.
- ☐ Lay out supplies on tables.
- ☐ Copy the **Parent and Caregiver Page**, 1 per family.
- ☐ Copy the **Faith at Home Page**, 1 per family.



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SHOOT FOR THE STARS

Adapt this event guide as needed to best fit the participants who will be attending.

- *Optional: Show the **Theme Slide**.*

Welcome

10 MINUTES

Hey, everyone! I'm so glad all of you could come today! We're going to have a great time and make some great memories together as we learn about stars, the constellations that they form, and the infinitely amazing God who created them. Before we get to those activities, let's begin by praying.

> Dear God, thank You for everyone here today. You created such an amazing world for us to live in. Help us to learn more about You and the stars You created. Amen.

Warm-Up Activity

- *Hand out a copy of the **Parent and Caregiver Page** to each parent.*

Before we get started creating our own constellations, let's warm up and start talking to each other. Talking to one another is such an important part of being a family. To kick off our time together, parents, I'd like you to ask your kids the Sharing Together question from your **Parent and Caregiver Page**. Then, kids, I'd like you to ask your parents the same question. Here it is:

> **If you could have any superpower, what would it be? How would you use it to help people?**

- *Allow about five minutes for this activity. But, if conversation is still flowing, allow additional time.*

Introduce the Family Faith Topic

I hope you discovered some fun things about each other from that question. Today, we're also going to discover things about God. Together, we'll explore two of the many characteristics of God. A characteristic is a special quality that makes an individual or group different from others. For example, some of your unique characteristics may be that you are funny, artistic, or good at sports. Those are all examples of characteristics. They are part of who you are and help determine what you are like and what you do well. The two characteristics we're going to talk about may sound like they don't belong together but, with God, they are a perfect fit.

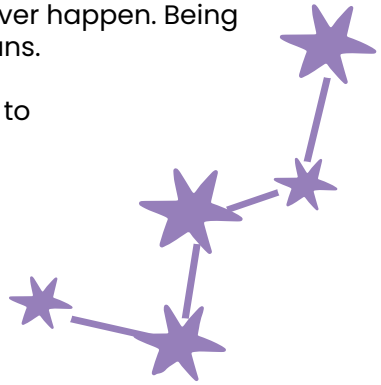
Today we are going to explore how God is both *eternal* and *exclusive*. These words may not be familiar to you. So let's take just a minute to make sure we all understand what these words mean.

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First, let's look at the word *eternal*. In life, we measure many things about ourselves. We measure time with our age, we measure our height and our weight, we measure our feet with shoe sizes, we measure our academic abilities with grades, and that's just a few.

But when it comes to God, you can't measure Him like a person. God has no beginning because He has always existed. God always will be because He will never end. He is everywhere at the same time and knows everything that has ever happened and everything that will ever happen. Being unable to measure something because it goes on forever is what *eternal* means.



But as big as God is, He can also be *exclusive*. That means He can be as close to us as our very best friend. How many of you know more than twenty people? Raise your hand. *(Group response)* Keep your hand up if you can answer yes as I ask questions about these people. Do you know each one's name? How about each one's birthday? Do you know each person's favorite colors? Favorite food? What about their favorite song? More than those things, do you know what makes each of those people sad? Happy? Do you know their deepest dreams and goals?

Do they know all of those things about you? *(Group response)*

Knowing some things about someone and having a special bond with someone that allows you to know each other deeply are two different things. Knowing someone, inside and out, on a deep, personal level and them knowing you like that are what make your friendship personal and exclusive, or very close.

So consider this: The eternal God of the world, who can't be measured in any way, knows you inside and out. The Bible says that God even knows how many hairs are on your head. I'm pretty sure that there is no one in the whole world who knows that about you. I'd guess you don't even know that about yourself!

God wants you to be close to Him too, closer than you are to anyone else. Think about how cool that is! That is cooler than the biggest celebrity or sports star in the world knowing everything about you and you knowing everything about that person.

Parents, the world is constantly trying to put God in a box. Too often God and things that relate to our spirituality are seen as accessories to our life—things to pay attention to if we have time or they are convenient. But, our limitless, all-knowing, all-present Creator wants us to have a close relationship with Him. Our kids need to see us being aware of God's involvement in every part of our day. He needs to be in our conversations, in our relationships, in our interactions with others, in our behavior, and even in our fun. As we go through this activity today, start to pray that God will show you ways to talk about Him in every moment of your and your kid's day. So, parents, share this with your kids:

Tell your kids how you can make God part of your everyday life and ask them how they will make God part of theirs.

- *Allow a few minutes for this activity. However, if conversation is still flowing, allow for additional time.*

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Great job! One way God reveals His eternal and exclusive nature to us is through His creation of space and the galaxy. God created space that goes on and on, much further than the eye can see. And yet He is also right here with us, wanting a close relationship with each one of us. We are more special to Him than anything else in His other creation. Before we begin our activity, let's look at what the Bible says about this.

- *This first verse was featured in the Plant a Pizza Garden event. If you have already done that event, ask families if they have learned this verse together.*
- *Show the first **Bible Verses Slide**.*

God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see. Colossians 1:16

Parents, there is something so special about your kids getting to hear you read Scripture aloud. Could we have one parent volunteer read each of these verses out loud as they appear on the screen?

- *Show each **Bible Verses Slide** in turn, allowing volunteer to read each verse.*

"Can anyone hide from me in a secret place? Am I not everywhere in all the heavens and earth?" says the LORD. Jeremiah 23:24

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Psalm 19:1

When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you set in place—what are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them? Psalm 8:3–4

O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. . . . I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! Psalm 139:1, 7

"God is so great—higher than the heavens, higher than the farthest stars." Job 22:12

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Parents, one of the most important things we can teach our kids is to memorize Scripture. Having verses rooted deeply in their hearts will eventually become the weapons they use to defend themselves from the lies of the enemy. Knowledge of Scripture can protect them from being deceived by Satan's mental attacks. By memorizing verses together, you have the unique opportunity to coach your kid through life's circumstances using God's Word as a weapon. You can model on how to defeat the enemy with the use of Scripture.

There is one more verse that I want to read. This is our featured Bible Verse.

- *Show the **Featured Bible Verse Slide.***

> **Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Isaiah 40:26**

This is an awesome verse that I'd like to encourage you to memorize together as a family. We're all going to work on this verse in just a while.

But before we do, let me explain about this verse. What do you think this verse is talking about? *(Allow responses.)* The writer is talking about the stars in the sky. There are so many stars in the sky that it is impossible to count them all. But God, the One who created each and every one of them, knows every single star by name. How much more do you think He knows each one of us and cares for us?

FAMILY ACTIVITY TIME

20 MINUTES

Ready . . .

Today we are going to make constellation projectors. Parents, to get started, read Parent Prompt 1 from the **Parent and Caregiver Page.**

> **Parent Prompt 1:** I'm so glad that we get to hang out today and make this cool project! While we learn about stars and constellations today, we're also going to learn some amazing things about God. Did you know that God not only made you, but wants to know you and spend time with you every single day? He's never too busy or too far away to spend time with us. All we have to do is say His name and He's there to listen to us. He's there every minute of every day. He shows himself to us through the beauty of His creation. He wants to teach us things as we explore the wonderful world He gave us. I'm excited to learn about some of that with you today.

- *Pause while parents read Parent Prompt 1 aloud.*

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Set . . .

Today we're going to make a constellation projector. Who knows what *constellations* are? *(Group response)* Constellations are a group of stars, arranged in a pattern, that people have identified that look like different images or shapes. Here are a few examples.

- *Show the **Constellation Slides**.*

God set the world in motion, and it's constantly spinning or rotating. This means that the stars we see in the night sky change throughout the year. But, if you look into the sky at the right time of year, you should be able to see some of these constellations in the sky.

- *Hand out an empty toilet paper roll, a **Projector Page**, scissors, and a pushpin to each person.*

Because stargazing is a nighttime event, I thought it would be fun to make a project that works best in the dark. Let's get started with your constellation projectors. Each of you has a toilet paper roll, a paper with some things to cut out, scissors, and a pushpin. Parents, please read Parent Prompt 2.

> **Parent Prompt 2:** I can't wait to see how this project turns out. First, we're going to choose which constellation we want to make for our projector. Let's look at the options we have. It's so cool to think that each and every one of these is there in the sky because of God. *(Read the names of the constellations in the circles.)* Is there one that you like the best?

- *Pause while parents read the prompt aloud and everyone follows the instructions.*
- *Allow parents and kids to choose their constellation.*

Now I'd like each of you to cut out the blue rectangle and the constellation you chose to make for your projector.

- *Assist kids as needed.*
- *Remind kids to use scissors correctly and to cut only the paper.*

Now wrap the blue rectangle around the tube so you can see the words. Then hold it in place while an adult secures it for you.

- *Assist kids as needed.*
- *Have an adult volunteer tape or staple the wrap in place.*

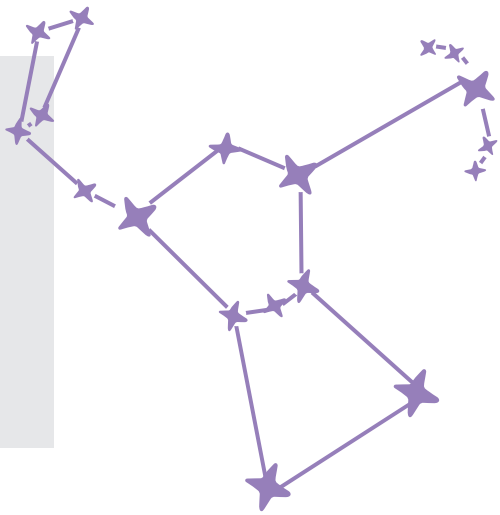
Next, I want you to center the constellation you chose over one open end and carefully fold the edges down over the tube. Then put tape around the tube to hold the constellation in place.

- *Assist kids as needed.*

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Now, use the pushpin to poke a small hole through each dot that represents a star in your constellation. Be sure the pin goes all the way through the paper. Parents, be sure to assist your kids as needed with this part. Then read Parent Prompt 3.



Parent Prompt 3: Did you know that people have used the constellations to tell them where they were headed? Explorers and sailors used to do that a lot. Some people still use the constellations for that today. The constellations help us recognize stars. Then by tracking how the constellations move across the sky, people can figure out the direction they are going. Sometimes they can even tell how fast they are moving in that direction. Where would you like to follow the stars to if you could go anywhere?

- Allow sev*eral minutes for discussion.*
- *Hand out a flashlight to each kid.*

Now, for the best part! Are you ready to make your constellations appear? *(Group response)* Shine your flashlight through the open end of your projector tube so the light shines out the holes that you've made in the paper at the other end. When I turn out the lights, you should see your constellation shine through!

- *Allow kids a few minutes to play with their projectors.*
- *Let kids make another projector if time and supplies allow.*

Go . . . Deeper!

There's one more thing to do while you are still holding your projectors. Did you notice the Bible verse on it? *(Group response)* That's the Bible verse that I want you to learn as a family. It reminds us that God created these amazing constellations. Let's read it together.

Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Isaiah 40:26

I hope that every time you see the stars in the sky you'll remember this Bible verse!

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FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP TIME

10 MINUTES

Wow! All of your constellation projects look great! Like you just talked about together, stars and constellations have been used for a long time as a map or guide for explorers and sailors, They traveled by boat on the sea, ocean, or even a large lake, and didn't have land markings to tell them where they were or where they were headed. God made such brilliant things in His creation that He wants us to use and enjoy.

Did you know that God also gave us a map for our life? First of all, why do you think we need a map for our life? *(Allow responses.)* There are lots of reasons. We need to know what things are right and wrong. We need to know what God wants us to do while we are here on earth. We have to know what God expects us to do so we can make sure we are living the way He wants us to. Then when difficult decisions come up in our life, we know how to handle them.

Answers to life's questions and solutions to the problems we will face in life can be found in the Bible. That's right. The Bible is the map that God gave us. If we study it and learn how to use it correctly, we won't ever have to be lost or confused in life.

There's a Bible verse found in Psalm 119:105 that says, "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." The person who wrote this verse was talking about God's Word, what we call the Bible. The things God provided for us in the Bible act like a light for us as we walk through life.

Stars and constellations provide light and direction. But if we walked outside tonight, most of us wouldn't be able to use the stars to find our way home. We don't know how to recognize certain stars or what their position in the sky means. It takes learning about them and studying them to really understand how to make them useful. It's a lot like that with the Bible. We have to spend time studying God's Word, learning what it says, what it means, and how we can apply it to life. Then it can truly guide us the way God intended it to.

One of the ways you can do this is by studying and memorizing Bible verses together as a family. When we can talk about different passages of the Bible together, we can learn from each other and see different points of view on what it could mean. Let's do that with the Bible verse you'll be learning together.

Parents, there isn't a right or wrong way to do this. Just read the whole verse together. Then read each phrase and talk about what that part of the verse might mean. Then share how you can apply that verse to your life or use it to remember what we learned about God today.

- *Allow several minutes for parents and kids to discuss.*

Would anyone like to share what they discussed?

- *Allow time for responses but don't force participation.*

You all did great! I hope you had fun today, too. I hope that you make some great memories watching the night sky for your constellations! Thank you for coming today and for sharing your time with us.

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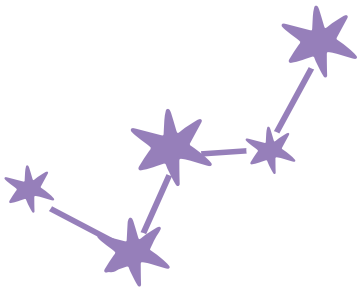
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CLOSING

5 MINUTES

As we close, I'd like to encourage each parent to pray for your kids and ask God to bless the truth that has been planted in their hearts and minds today. So, parents, get close and place your hands on your kid's head or shoulder and pray a blessing over them. A prayer of blessing is provided on your **Parent and Caregiver Page,** or just use your own words.

- *Allow time for parents to pray for their kids.*



I'm so glad that you came today. I hope you enjoyed our *Shoot for the Stars* family event and talking about some of God's great creation together. I pray that you'll always remember how our great God who created this amazing universe wants to know you deeply and have a close relationship with you.

- *Ask everyone to help clean up their space before they go home.*
- *Tell everyone that there is a **Faith at Home Page** with activities to help families continue to grow in their faith at home.*

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PARENT & CAREGIVER PAGE

The leader will tell you when to share the following.

Sharing Together

If you could have any superpower, what would it be? How would you use it to help people?

Tell your kid how you can make God part of your everyday life and ask them how they will make God part of theirs.

Parent Prompt 1: Affirmation

I'm so glad that we get to hang out today and make this cool project! While we learn about stars and constellations today, we're also going to learn some amazing things about God. Did you know that God not only made you, but wants to know you and spend time with you every single day? He's never too busy or too far away to spend time with us. All we have to do is say His name and He's there to listen to us. He's there every minute of every day. He shows himself to us through the beauty of His creation. He wants to teach us things as we explore the wonderful world He gave us. I'm excited to learn about some of that with you today.

Parent Prompt 2: Instruction

I can't wait to see how this project turns out. First, we're going to choose which constellation we want to make for our projector. Let's look at the options we have. It's so cool to think that each and every one of these is there in the sky because of God. *(Read the names of the constellations in the circles.)* Is there one that you like the best?

Parent Prompt 3: Interaction

Did you know that people have used the constellations to tell them where they were headed? Explorers and sailors used to do that a lot. Some people still use the constellations for that today. The constellations help us recognize stars. Then by tracking how the constellations move across the sky, people can figure out the direction they are going. Sometimes they can even tell how fast they are moving in that direction. Where would you like to follow the stars to if you could go anywhere?

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Parent Prayer of Blessing

Pray over your kids. Say your own prayer or read the following.

Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Isaiah 40:26

(Name of kid), it's amazing to know that the same God who created everything we can see and even things we can't see is the One who created you. He loves you so much that He sent His Son to die on the Cross for your sins. He knows you by name and loves you because you are His child. May you always remember that you were created by God and He has a purpose for your life! Amen.

FAITH AT HOME: STARGAZING

Use this family activity to continue to share your faith with your kids at home.

Sit outside at night, look at the stars, and talk together using the following prompts. If you can't see the stars from where you live, look up some photos of constellations on your computer or check out a book from your local library.

Sharing Together

If you could design a new planet, what would you name it? What color would it be?

If we saw it in the sky tonight, where would it be?

What would it be like to live on your planet? How many people would be there? Would animals and plants live on it? What would the weather be like?

Parent Prompt 1: Affirmation

I'm so glad we get to hang out tonight! The stars are so beautiful. I wonder how God came up with His design for space. Each star is unique, just like each person. Did you know that God made you special, just the way He wanted you? He created you with special talents and abilities, and a personality that no one else on earth has in exactly the same way. He also wants to spend time with you every day. And even though He is the Creator and Ruler of the universe, He is never too busy or too far away to spend time with us. All we have to do is pray to Him and He listens to us. He's right there every minute of every day. He shows himself to us through the beauty of His creation and wants to teach us things as we explore the wonderful world He gave us. What do you think are some of the most special and wonderful parts about you?

Parent Prompt 2: Instruction

That reminds me of the Bible verse we're learning. Let's say it together.

Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name.
Isaiah 40:26 (NLT)

Isn't it amazing to know that the same God who made the heavens and everything there—constellations, stars, and planets—made you and me? Not only did He make us, but He knows us and wants to have a close relationship with us.

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Parent Prompt 3: Interaction

Ask your kids questions like . . .

Do you enjoy looking at the sky like this? Which star is the brightest?
What is your favorite part of space—stars, planets, galaxies, shooting stars, comets, or something else?

Let's talk about how we each made God part of our day. *(Share your example first. Talk about how you included God in your day. Then have your kids share.)*

Is there anything you'd like me to pray about with you?

Parent Prayer of Blessing

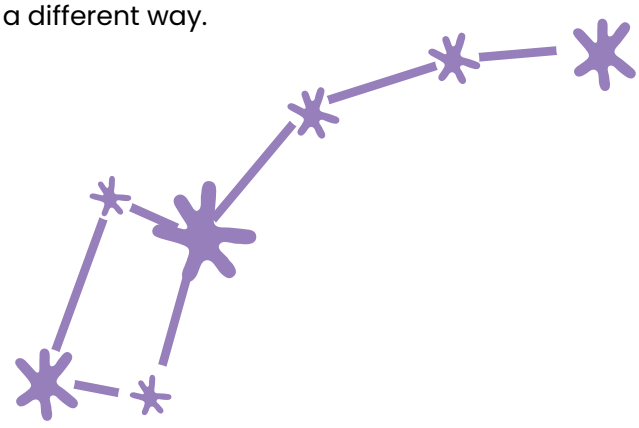
Pray for any requests that your kids shared. Then close with a prayer of blessing for your kids.

Dear God, thank You for giving me the gift of *(name of kid)*. He or she is so special and their gifts and talents amaze me every day. Help them to continue to use their special talents to bless those around them and to honor You. Thank You for creating this beautiful world. Help us to take good care of it. Amen.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

Have more time or need an alternative activity to do as a family? Choose one or more of the activities listed below to teach the same faith value in a different way.

Bonus Activities



- *Make marshmallow constellations with mini marshmallows and toothpicks or skinny pretzel sticks. Insert the toothpicks or pretzel sticks into the marshmallows to form the shape of the constellations.*
- *Go to a local planetarium.*
- *Borrow a telescope and watch how the stars move across the sky.*
- *Go out into the country with a blanket, where there are no artificial lights to mask the brightness of the stars, and stargaze.*
- *Hang glow-in-the-dark stars on your kid's ceiling to remind them of the eternal and exclusive characteristics of God.*
- *Track the phases of the moon together over one month. Draw what the moon looks like each night in a journal.*