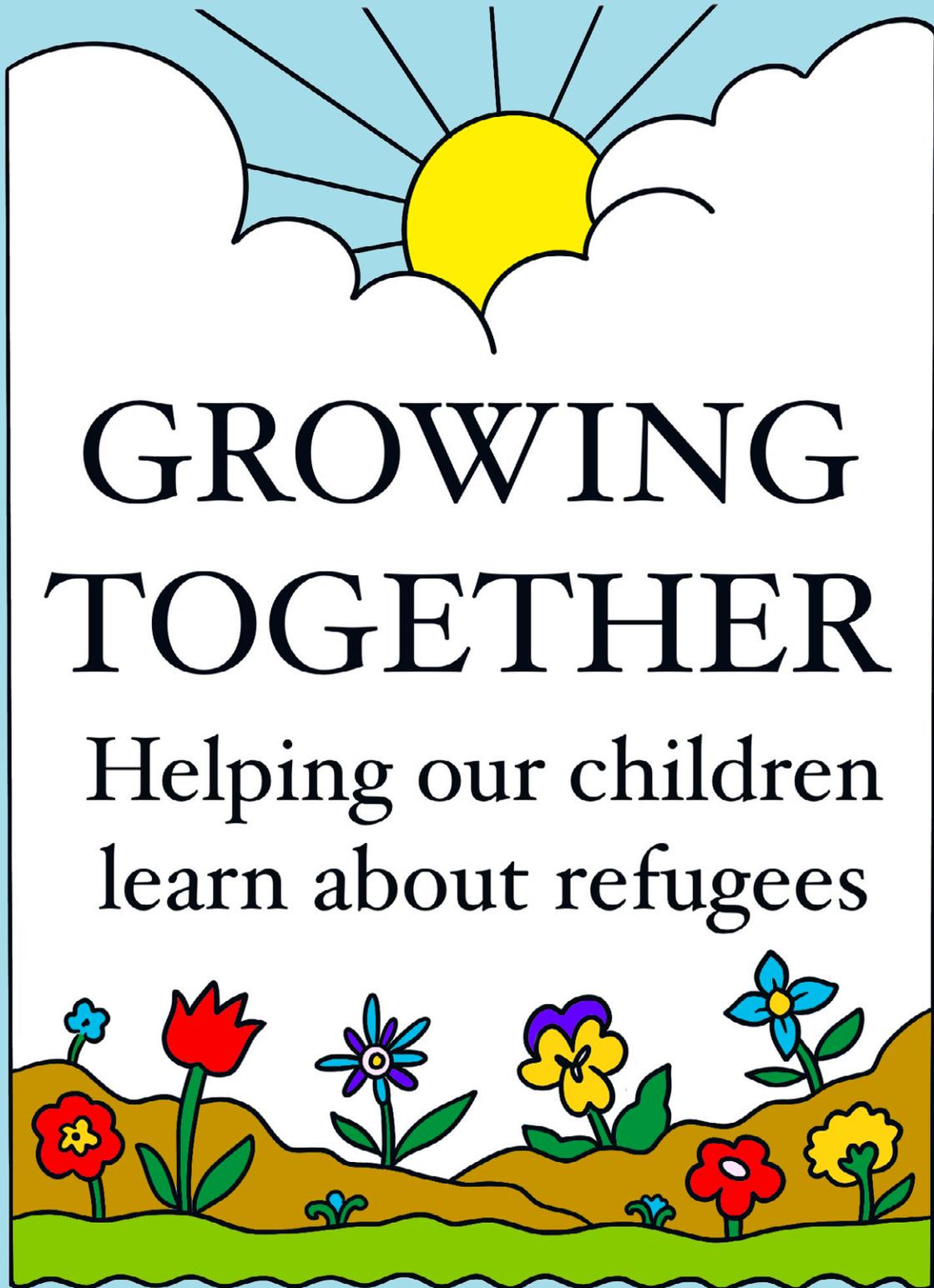


A SERIES OF FOUR LESSONS



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INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR REFUGEES  
CANADA

## **Growing together: Helping our children learn about refugees.**

A publication of International Association For Refugees Canada  
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## **Acknowledgments**

This resource has been created by the International Association for Refugees Canada (IAFR Canada). IAFR works with churches and Christian organizations around the world to help people survive and recover from forced displacement. You can learn more about who we are and what we do by visiting our website [www.iafr.ca](http://www.iafr.ca). Please let us know if you use this material. We would love to hear from you! [info@iafr.ca](mailto:info@iafr.ca).

We are extremely thankful to all the individuals and refugee groups who were involved in the creation of this resource. We are particularly grateful for those who shared their personal refugee journeys with us. Deep appreciation goes to Cathy Fairley (primary author), Craig Fairley (graphic designer) and Carolyn Amorin (artist) who worked hard in the development of this resource.

## A **FOUR LESSON PROGRAM**

# Introduction

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Talking to children about refugees is important. We know that hearing refugee stories helps children become more compassionate towards newcomers in their community. We also know that loving foreigners and practising hospitality are really important to God. The Bible is jam-packed with refugee stories!

The way we talk about refugees is important. We always want to demonstrate respect and affirm the dignity of refugees. Refugees are not simply 'poor people' who need our help. While they might have some specific needs at particular points on their journey, it is important to remember that refugees are courageous and resilient people.

Refugees are people who have been forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence. We always want to demonstrate respect and affirm the dignity of refugees. We must never lose sight of the fact that they have not always been refugees and they did not want to leave their homes or their country. Refugees deserve both our respect and our encouragement. That is one of the underlying goals in creating this resource.

Each lesson in this series includes a refugee story to share with the children. We trust that by sharing photos and messages from people with lived refugee experience your children will be able to feel more connected to 'real' people. We also suggest you make the learning experiences as interactive and 'real' as possible by connecting with organizations in your community who support refugees. They will be able to help you share the messages and work your children create with some of the refugees they support. There is a list of organizations that you can connect with in the resource section. Don't hesitate to contact us if you need help connecting with a local organization. You can contact us at [info@iafr.ca](mailto:info@iafr.ca).

The lessons have been primarily designed for use in church children's ministry settings and follow this format:

- Introduction (all ages together)
- Hands-on activities in smaller groups (children can be grouped by age into smaller groups or offered a choice of the activities in a 'centre' style)
- Closing time with prayer and sharing
- At-home activities

Please modify and adapt this material to suit your needs. For example, the lessons could easily be adapted to be used by a family, as part of a refugee learning workshop, or at a Christian school or VBS (vacation Bible school) program.

The concepts of survival, welcome, and support are conveyed throughout the lessons using the analogy of potted plants. A key bible story and bible verse has been chosen and included with each lesson.

Each lesson includes:

- a list of what you will need for each lesson
- a script to be followed for the lesson's introduction
- photographs and messages from refugees
- colouring pages for each lesson's bible story and key bible verse
- craft/activity resources
- a parent letter with at-home suggestions

A resource list with books and video references is also included.

It is our prayer that this resource will help your children grow in their understanding and respect for people around the world who find themselves in need of refuge.

**Peace!**

*The IAFR Canada team*

# LESSON ONE

## Welcoming and Encouraging Refugees

**NOTE:** Lesson One can stand alone as a way to introduce children to refugee issues, without using Lessons 2–4.

**Theme:** All people can grow and be the beautiful people God designed them to be when they live in places where their basic needs can be met.

**Bible Story:** Jesus and his family flee to Egypt. —Matthew 2:13

**Bible Verses:** Treat refugees with love. Love them as you love yourself. —Leviticus 19:34  
Therefore encourage one another and build each other up. —1 Thessalonians 5:11



### INTRODUCTION / CHILDREN'S SERMON / FOCUS

ALL AGES TOGETHER, ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE CHURCH CONGREGATION, DEPENDING ON CHURCH'S FORMAT

- Materials needed:**
- Flowering plant
  - Easel or clip board and paper for listing children's responses
  - Photo #1A (full size copy at the end of the lesson)
  - Photo #1B (full size copy at the end of the lesson) and message
  - Globe
  - Bible marked with Leviticus and Thessalonians
  - A story bible marked to Matthew 2:13

#### Suggested script:

I was so excited yesterday. I opened my door and found this. [Show plant] What a great gift! So I know I need to take good care of it so it will grow and keep flowering. What does it need? [examples: sun, water, soil, pot – These could be printed on the paper.]

We're a bit like this plant. We also need things to grow and survive—to flower, to be what God meant us to be. What do WE need? [examples: love, food, clean water, protection, home, friends, health, safety – Write these down on the easel/ paper.]

Sometimes, in some places, people don't have what they need to be the best they can be.

We may not see that here in our city but in

many places in the world people, including children, may not have what they need. They might not have food, they might not have schools and teachers. They might live where the weather is dangerous. You might have talked about this at school or seen this on the news. [Show globe]

[Show Photo #1A: An unsafe situation]

Does this look like a safe place to live? If someone lived here could they be safe and grow? Why not?

Just like my plant needs a pot and clean soil people also need a safe home. If they don't have what they need to survive do you know what their family has to do? They have to flee—they leave—they find somewhere safer.



PHOTO #1A

That is what a refugee is. Someone who lived where they were not safe. They had to find a safer place so they could grow up and live—and to be all God wants them to be able to be. Imagine what that would be like. To have to leave everything behind and find a new safe place.

Do you know there are stories of people in the Bible that were refugees. They didn't have food. They were slaves. They were being hurt. They weren't safe. [Open picture bible to Matthew 2.] Even Jesus and his family were refugees. Right after he was born they had to flee to Egypt so they would be safe.

God wants us to care about refugees. It says right here in the bible in Leviticus.



PHOTO #1B

*Treat refugees with love.  
Love them as you love yourself*  
—Leviticus 19:34

So they don't have to feel alone. God really cares for refugees.

I wonder what we can do to let refugees know that we care too? How can we let refugees know that we are glad they are here in our city? [Take ideas and list them on paper.]

This a great list. You are so right. When refugees come here to our community we can find ways to welcome them.

We can be friendly.

We can show patience and understanding — it must be hard to have to move.

We can show them kindness.

And if they still live in another country we can encourage them.

They are not alone. We're cheering for them.

God tells us this is the right thing to do. [Open Bible to 1 Thessalonians 5:11]

It says right here:

**Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.**

Today we're going to talk about ways that we can care about refugees. Ways we can encourage them. Ways we can build them up.

[Show Photo #1B: children in a new safe place to live.]

One of the children in this picture is a girl named Amira. She has a message for us. [Read message]:

**"Back in my home it was a very nice life because I used to play with my cousins and I visited my grandparents and my uncle and aunt all the time. In Syria these days people are having a really hard life. Now in Canada it's safe for me and my family. I go to school (which I LOVE) and I learned a new language. I am happy because I am with my mom and dad and my four sisters and everyone is safe. I wish, in the future, to visit my country and see my cousins."**

Just like my new plant—the newcomer can grow, do well and bring beauty to our world. We can help make sure refugees can grow up and be the amazing people God planned them to be. As long as they can be safe. We're going to talk about this more in our groups today.



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

CHILDREN CAN BE GROUPED BY AGE INTO SMALLER GROUPS OR OFFERED A CHOICE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES SET UP AS CENTRES. COLOURING SHEETS FOR THE BIBLE STORY AND THE BIBLE VERSES ARE PROVIDED AS AN 'EXTRA' FOR CHILDREN WHO WISH THEM.

### Activity Resources

On the following pages (after the photos for the introduction), you will find:

- Colouring pages
- Craft/Activity ideas, including:
  - » A banner that could be made as a group – one letter per pennant to spell "WELCOME"
  - » A flower in a pot additional colouring page
  - » Bouquet of flowers craft
- Blank note paper for letter writing

**Discuss:**

- Someone who has had to leave their home is called a refugee.
- Some stay in other countries or in refugee camps and wait.
- How can we encourage people while they wait?
- Some eventually come to Canada to make a home here.
- How can we make them feel like they belong and we're glad they are here?

**Do:**

 FOR YOUNG CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• colouring sheet of a flower growing in a pot (need: crayons)</li></ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• group flower card craft (need: construction paper, scissors, glue)</li></ul>
 FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• welcome banner (need: crayons, markers or pencil crayons)</li></ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• welcome letter (need: pens or pencils)</li></ul>
 FOR OLDER CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• letter of encouragement to refugees living in a refugee camp (need: pens or pencils, scissors, string, tape or glue)</li></ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• letter to newcomers living in our community, welcoming them to Canada (need: pens or pencils)</li></ul>



**CLOSING**

In small groups or with everyone together, photograph or record their messages and forward the photos, audio messages or videos to community or national agencies who can share them with the refugees and newcomers they work with. (See Appendix)

**Share:**

- photograph their artwork, signs and letters
- include an audio recording to go along with their art, including the bible verse. (With parent permission, consider a video recording)

**Pray:**

- for people around the world living in unsafe situations
- for refugees who must flee their home communities
- for us, to show them kindness

**At Home**

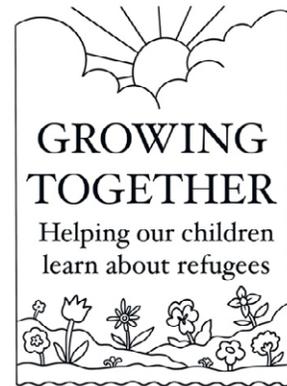
BE SURE THE CHILDREN TAKE THEIR WORK HOME TO SHARE WITH THEIR FAMILIES. INCLUDE THE PARENT LETTER, INCLUDED ON THE NEXT PAGE. (EDIT AS YOU WISH)

Dear Parents:

Today your child learned about refugees, using a flowering plant as an analogy.

These were the basic learnings:

- We all need to live in places that are safe and healthy.
- Many people around the world live in dangerous places.
- A refugee is someone who has to find a new home because it's no longer safe for them to stay in their communities.
- God instructs us to welcome and encourage others.
- When we welcome newcomers it is easier for them to grow and become the beautiful person God designed them to be.



Your child wrote a letter to a refugee child and/or drew a picture for them. These will be shared with our partner organizations who help to welcome refugees to our community and who help refugees in other places of the world.

At home, you could:

- **PRAY** — Include prayers for refugees at mealtimes
- **TALK ABOUT** — Talk about people you know who have had to leave where they live and have made a new home
- **MAKE AND DO** — Work together to create a welcome mat or sign for your doorway or window
- **READ** — There are many pictures, books and novels about refugees and their experiences. Here are a few suggestions:

**FOR CHILDREN AGED 3–6:**

*My Two Blankets*, by Irene Kobald (2015)  
*What is a Refugee?* by Elise Gravel (2019)  
*The Color of Home*, by Mary Hoffman (2012)  
*The Journey*, by Francesca Sanna (2016)  
*Small Finds a Home*, by Karin Celestine (2016)

**FOR CHILDREN AGED 6-9**

*Four Feet, Two Sandals*, by Karen Lynn Williams & Khadra Mohammed, illustrated by Doug Chayka (2007)  
*From Far Away*, by Robert Munsch and Saoussan Askar (1995/2017)  
*Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey*, by Doug Kuntz and Amy Shrodes (2017)  
*When I Get Older: The Story Behind "Wavin' Flag"*, by K'naan, illustrations by Rudy Gutierrez (2012)  
*Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey*, by Margriet Ruur  
*Where Will I Live?* by Rosemary McCarney  
*The Doll*, by Nhung N. Tran-Davies, illustrated by Ravy Puth

**FOR OLDER CHILDREN AGED 9 - 12**

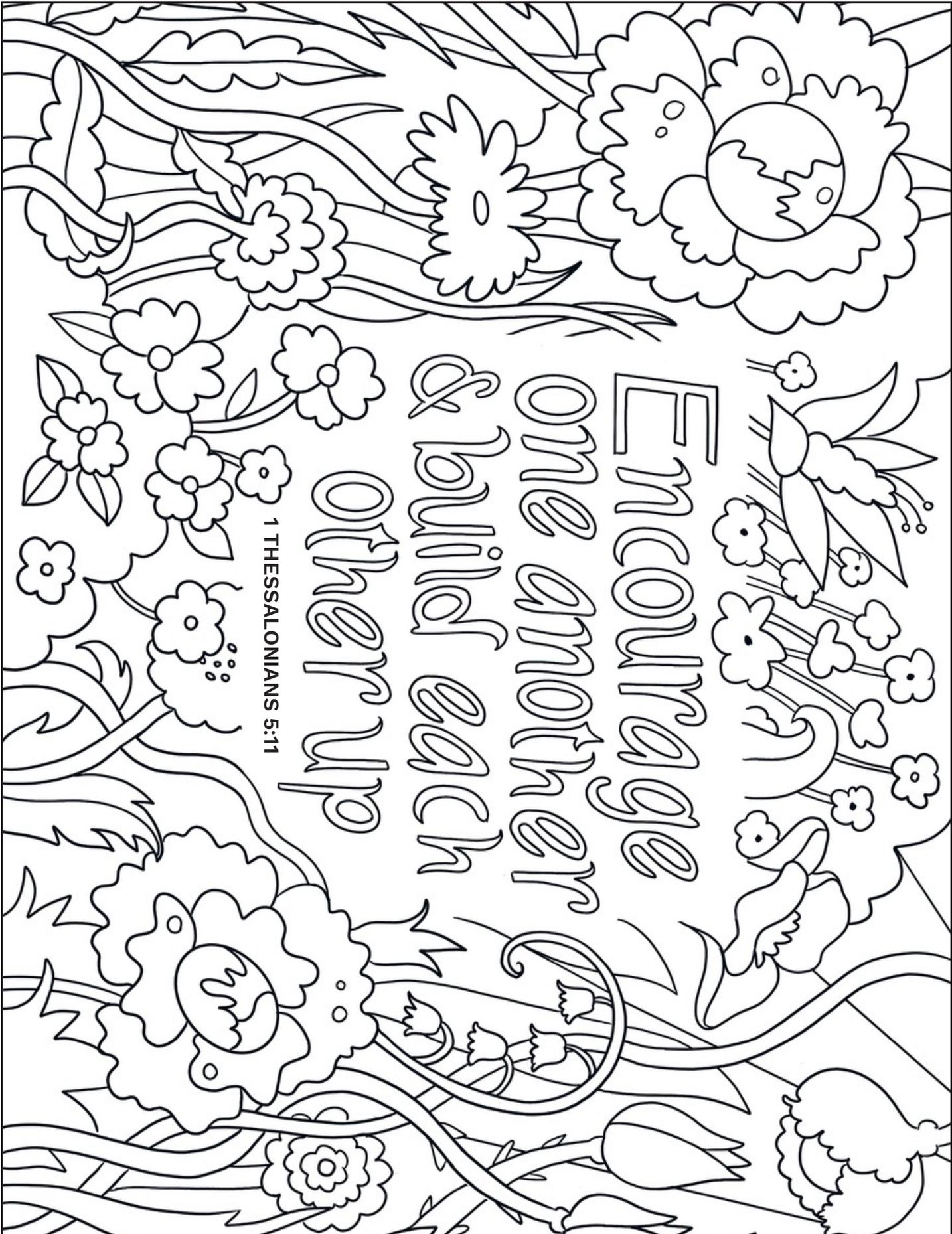
*Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*, by Loretta Scott King (2005)  
*My Name is Sangoel*, by Karen Williams (2009)  
*The Red Pencil*, by Andrew Pinkney  
*Escape From Aleppo*, by N. H. Senzai  
*Kiki and Jacques*, by Susan Ross





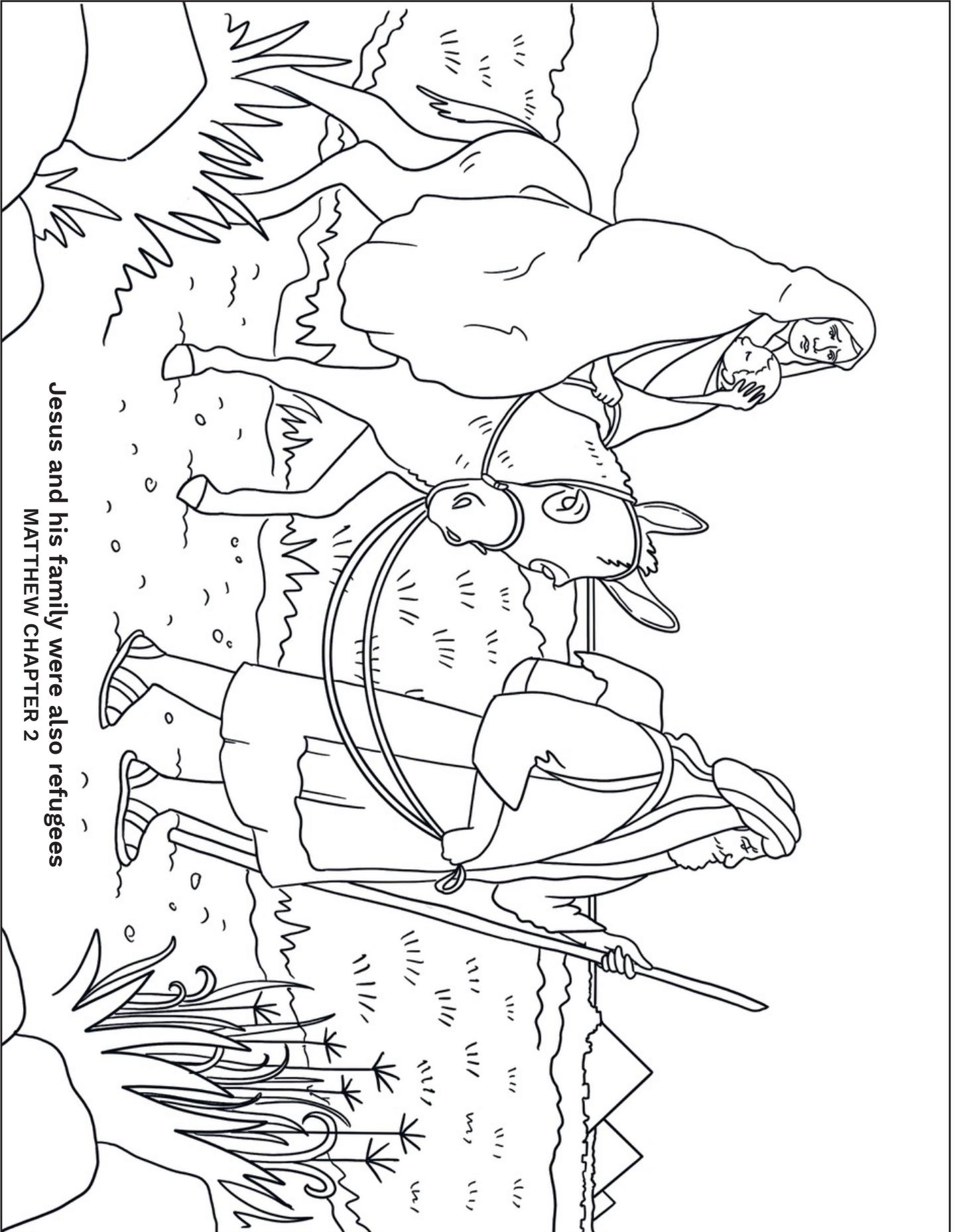
GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - LESSON ONE - PHOTO #1B

— CREDIT: IAFR CANADA/ALLISON WITT



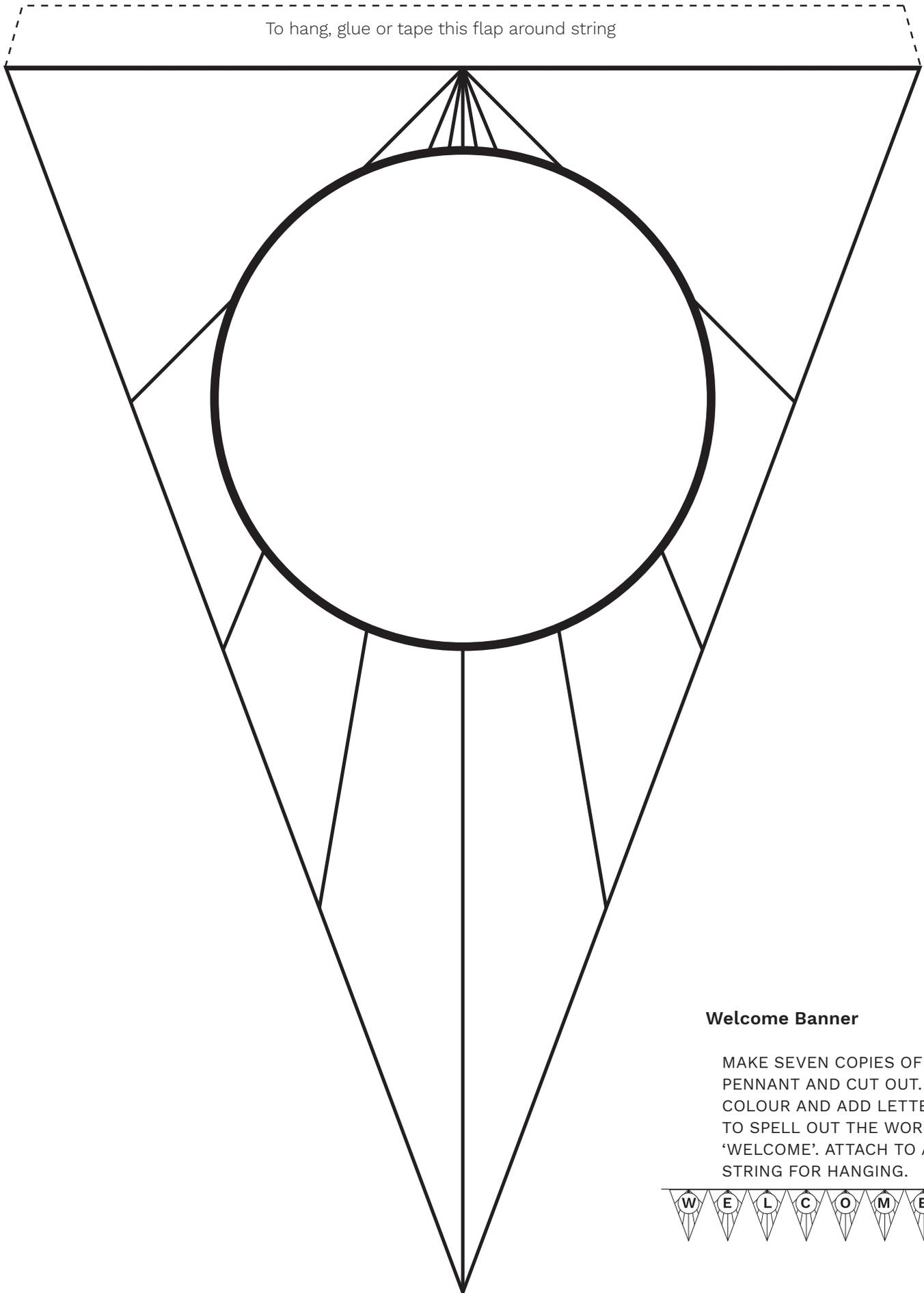
ENCOURAGE  
ONE ANOTHER  
& BUILD EACH  
OTHER UP

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11



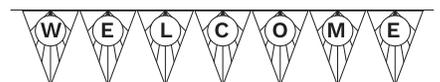
Jesus and his family were also refugees  
MATTHEW CHAPTER 2

To hang, glue or tape this flap around string



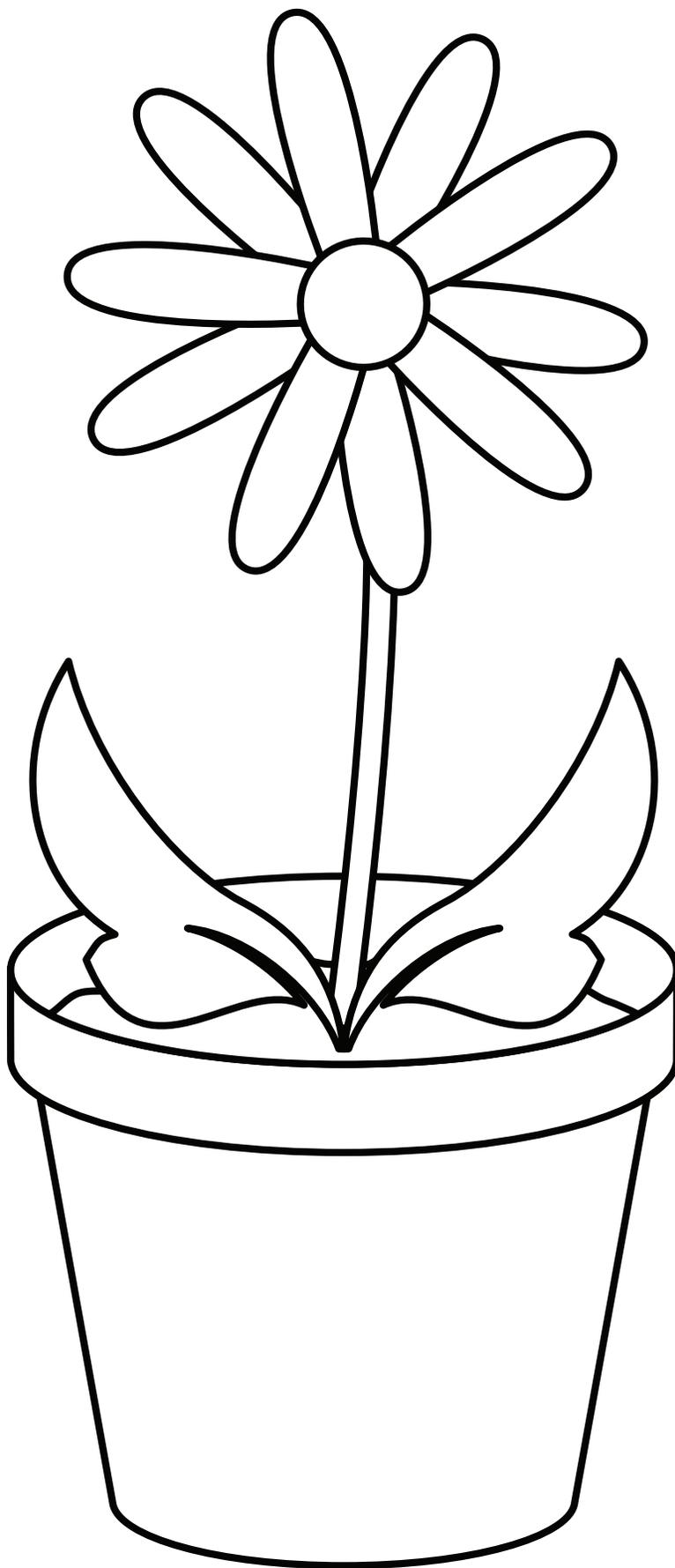
### Welcome Banner

MAKE SEVEN COPIES OF PENNANT AND CUT OUT. COLOUR AND ADD LETTERS TO SPELL OUT THE WORD 'WELCOME'. ATTACH TO A STRING FOR HANGING.



A large rectangular area with a solid top border and a solid bottom border. Inside, there are 15 horizontal dotted lines, creating 16 rows of writing space. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.





## BOUQUET OF FLOWERS

HAVE CHILDREN TRACE THEIR HAND ON VARIOUS COLOURS OF PAPER AND CUT THEM OUT. ATTACH A GREEN STRIP OF PAPER FOR A STEM, THEN ARRANGE ON A PAGE TO FORM A BOUQUET. ADD A FINAL CUTOUT OF A HAND TO HOLD THE BOUQUET. ADD WORDS TO CREATE A MESSAGE OR CARD.



## LESSON TWO

# God Cares About Refugees

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**Theme:** God cares about refugees and we can too.

**Bible Story:** Hagar —Genesis 16:6, 13

**Bible Verse:** God is the one who sees me —Genesis 16:6

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### INTRODUCTION / CHILDREN'S SERMON / FOCUS

ALL AGES TOGETHER ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE CHURCH CONGREGATION, DEPENDING ON CHURCH'S FORMAT

- Materials Needed:**
- Plant from last lesson
  - Photo #1A (See Lesson One)
  - Photo #2 and message
  - Bottle of vinegar
  - Watering can
  - Bible marked to Genesis 16:6
  - Picture bible marked to the story of Hagar
  - Tag with the words "This belongs to God" and string

#### Suggested script:



PHOTO #1A

Last time I showed you my plant. See? It's still doing well!

Remind me — what does it need to grow?

And we talked last time about people. What do people need to grow and do well?

And when people don't have what they need, they sometimes have to leave where they live. We call these people refugees. They have to make the big decision to leave. They might live first in a refugee camp. And sometimes they eventually arrive here, in our community. And we can welcome them when they come.

So think about my beautiful plant. You told me that it needs water to grow (show watering can) What would happen if it didn't get water. But it got vinegar instead? [Show vinegar bottle.]

What would I need to do if I wanted it to live?

That's right — I'd have to move it.

It might not even survive the move, but I would have to try.

Refugees are the same. They live somewhere dangerous where they can't get what they need

to survive and grow. [Show Photo #1A from last lesson.]

Their homes may be destroyed by storms. There may be a drought so they can't grow food. There might be wars and their cities are destroyed.

Or maybe they are not treated well and they are forced to move.

They have to leave.

It is a big decision. But we do know that God cares about everyone, especially refugees. So we know that God is with them. He knows what they are going through and He keeps them strong.

There were many refugees in the bible. Today's story comes from the book of Genesis. It is about a woman named Hagar. She was one of those people who was not treated well by the rest of the community. She was forced to leave her community. Believe it or not she was forced to flee to the desert. Imagine? No food. No water. No people to help.

While Hagar was in the desert God came to her and promised her a good future. Hagar was so relieved. She had thought even God had forgotten about her. But the Bible says God came, gave her water and promised to be with her. Hagar had a new name for God. She called him “the one who sees me”. Genesis 16:6, 13

God cares for us. He sees us. All of us. Here. Anywhere. “God SEES us”. And we know from the Bible that God has a special heart for refugees. And God wants us to, as well.

[Show Photo 2A and read message]:

***“Faith has been a big part of my whole journey. I feel like we get closer to God when we need him the most. For me, I needed God because of being in a new place, and feeling so much uncertainty, and fear...fear of the new place and also fear of going back. But being able to feel connected to God through prayer, and getting some peace, it really makes a difference in the journey. I don’t***

***think I could have done it without that sense that someone is looking after me. That sense of being taken care of, and being loved, Even when things are difficult and are not fair.”***

See my plant? I need to move it to somewhere better. Somewhere where it can keep growing. Plants are special. This one is too. It belongs to God — the God who sees. [Add “This belongs to God” tag to the stem.]

Refugees make a tough choice when they have to leave their homes. And they have a tough journey ahead of them. It takes time. But they believe they will have a better future. And they know that God is with them, no matter where they are.

Just like we can remember that this plant belongs to God — refugees belong to God too. God is the one who sees. God is with us. And God is with refugees.



PHOTO #2A



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

CHILDREN CAN BE GROUPED BY AGE INTO SMALLER GROUPS OR OFFERED A CHOICE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES SET UP AS ACTIVITY CENTRES. COLOURING SHEETS FOR THE BIBLE STORY AND THE BIBLE VERSES ARE PROVIDED AS AN ‘EXTRA’ FOR CHILDREN WHO WISH THEM.

### Activity Resources

On the following pages (after the photos for the introduction), you will find:

- Colouring pages
- Look and find activity sheet
- Sheet of tags for plant (group lesson) and bead bracelets craft.

### Discuss:

- Read story of Hagar
- Emphasize that she was mistreated, she fled, God found her, God spoke to her, God cared for her.
- Reminder that God sees refugees. They are not alone

### Do:

 FOR YOUNG CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play “I Spy”</li> <li>• Make “God sees you” binoculars (need: toilet paper tubes, glue or tape, string or ribbon, markers, construction paper and/or stickers)</li> </ul>
 FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “God sees me” bead bracelet — with a tag that says “I belong to God” (need: string, scissors, stringing beads)</li> <li>or</li> <li>• “I Spy” activity page</li> </ul>



FOR OLDER CHILDREN

- Discuss: why do refugees have to flee? (discrimination, war, famine) Use video clips found at [unhcr.org](http://unhcr.org).
- Create a message to refugees reminding them that God is the God who sees them.
- (need: paper, pens or pencils)



## CLOSING

In small groups or with everyone together, photograph or record their messages and forward the photos, audio messages or videos to community or national agencies who can share them with the refugees and newcomers they work with. (See Appendix)

### Share

Create a video or audio message to be shared with refugees that includes the ideas that:

- God is the one who sees
- God sees you— He cares about you
- So do we
- We're thinking about you
- We pray that you will be safe

### Pray

Pray for refugees — for people who have to flee — that they would feel God's presence and know that God is the God who sees

Music - "The God who Sees"

### At Home

BE SURE THE CHILDREN TAKE THEIR WORK HOME TO SHARE WITH THEIR FAMILIES. INCLUDE THE PARENT LETTER, INCLUDED ON THE NEXT PAGE. (EDIT AS YOU WISH)

Dear Parents:

Today your child talked about the story of Hagar.

The bible verse was God is "the one who sees me" Genesis 16:6

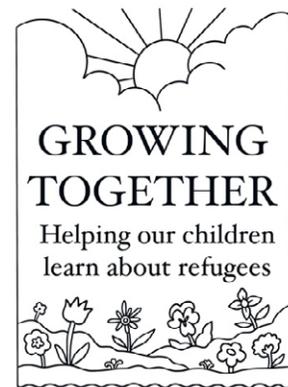
These were the basic learnings:

- we all belong to God
- God cares about us all
- refugees live in dangerous places so must move
- God sees refugees and God cares about refugees
- We can remember and show care to refugees too

In class your child wrote a message / drew a picture / created a bead bracelet for a refugee child. These will be shared with our partner organizations who help to welcome refugees to our community and who help refugees in other places of the world.

At home, you could:

- **PRAY** — Pray for refugees that they would feel God's presence, that God will keep them safe and that God would help us find ways to show that we also care for them
- **TALK ABOUT** — How God cares for us, how God cares for others
- **MAKE AND DO** — Play I Spy and tie this into the God who sees
- **READ** - Look together at a *Where's Waldo* book

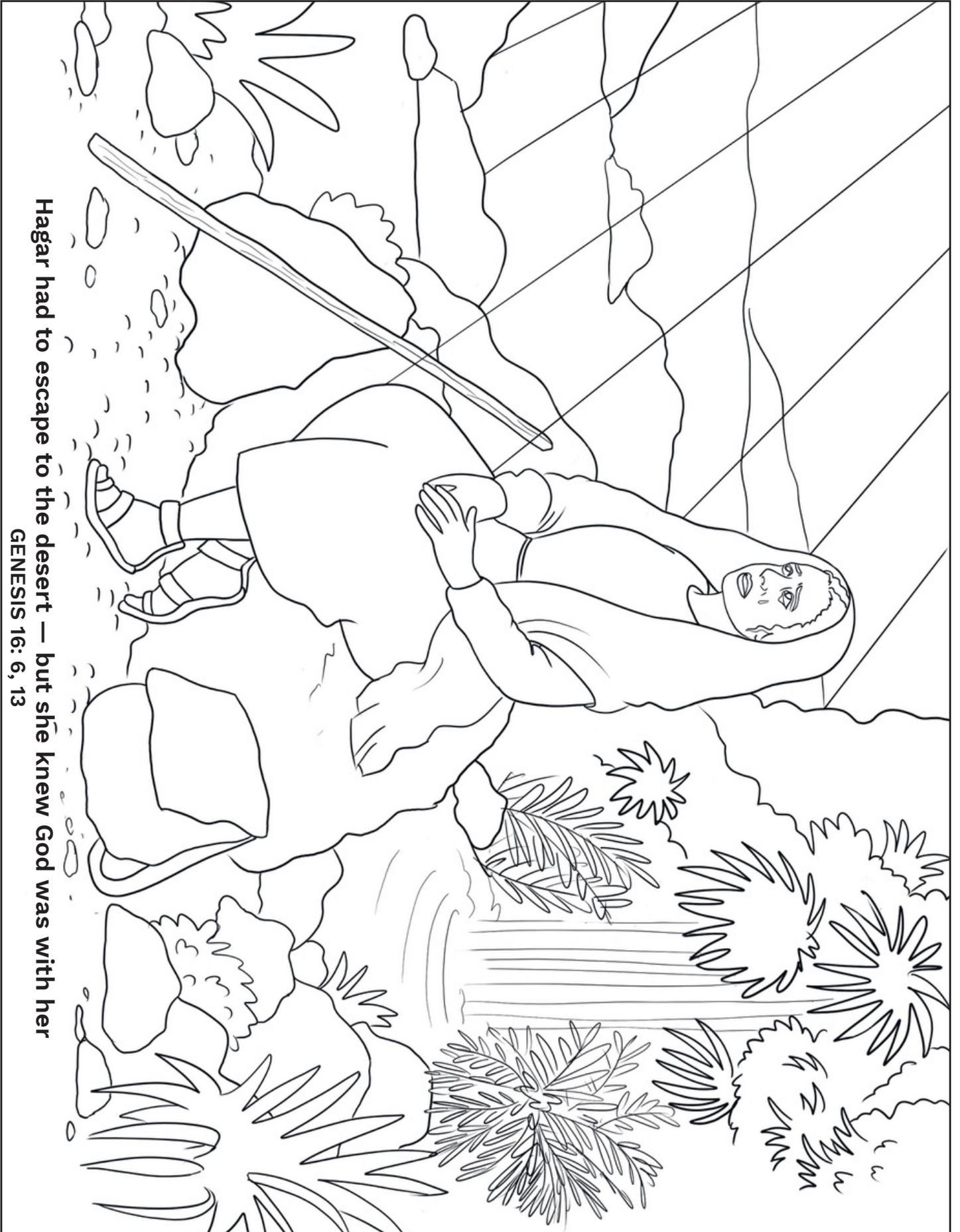




GROWING TOGETHER - LESSON TWO - PHOTO #2A — CREDIT: IAFFR USA / TOM ALBINSON

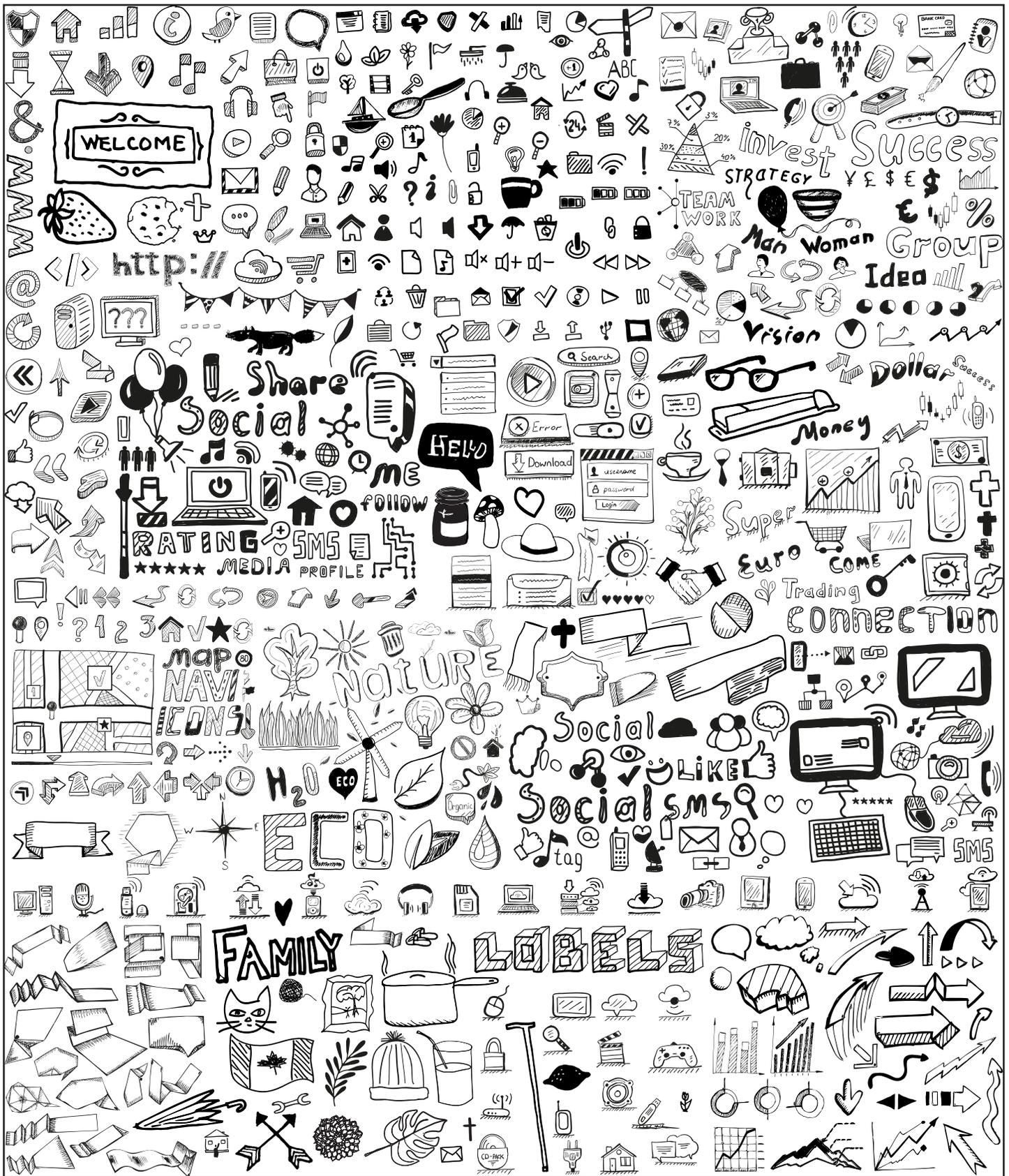
GENESIS 16: 13





Hagar had to escape to the desert — but she knew God was with her  
GENESIS 16: 6, 13

# LOOK AND FIND ...



- 1 fox
- 2 crowns
- 1 walking stick
- 15 hearts

- 6 crosses
- 1 pair of slippers
- 1 set of family photos
- 1 cookie

- 2 suitcases
- 1 cat
- 2 question marks
- 7 houses

*What else can you find?*

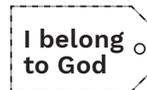
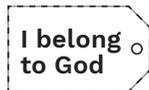
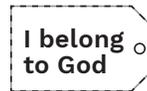
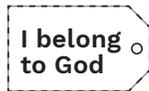
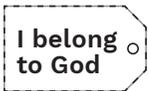
**Tag for plant**

Cut out for use during introduction:



**Tags for bead bracelets**

Cut along dotted lines



## LESSON THREE

# Refugees can help themselves and have a lot to offer

**Theme:** Refugees are capable people — they have a lot to offer!

**Bible Story:** Priscilla and Aquila —Acts 18 1-4, 24-26

**Bible Verse:** After this I looked ... I saw those from every nation, tribe, people and language —Revelation 7:9



### INTRODUCTION / CHILDREN'S SERMON / FOCUS

ALL AGES TOGETHER ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE CHURCH CONGREGATION, DEPENDING ON CHURCH'S FORMAT

- Materials Needed:**
- bible marked at Revelation 7:9,
  - story bible marked at the story of Priscilla and Aquila,
  - plant,
  - a second, larger pot with a different kind of flower already in it,
  - trowel,
  - map or globe,
  - pictures #3A, #3B, #3C, #3D, #3E

#### Suggested script:

Well, here's my plant.  
Tell me again. What do plants need in order to grow and bloom?  
Water. Remember from last time we talked about what would happen if the plant got vinegar instead of water. What would happen to the soil? Yes. It would get contaminated.  
What would I have to do? I would have to put it in a different pot  
We call that 'transplant'.  
I'm going to transplant it into this other pot

Imagine you are this plant.  
How would you feel about being moved?  
[Responses: *happy – safe, can grow; sad – not like the other plants, crowded, not sure if it would work*]  
It's fun to imagine being a flower isn't it?  
But what about people? We've been talking about refugees. People who have to leave their homes  
How would that feel?  
[Responses: *happy – safe, can start again; sad,*

*tough, don't know anyone]*

It definitely wouldn't be easy. Some refugees have to make a tough decision to leave. But others don't really have much of a choice. They know what they need to do in order to have a better life.

Refugees have great ideas about how they can have a better future. They have courage. They are determined. They know that God is on their side and they carry on.

Our Bible Story is about a husband and wife — Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18 1-4, 24-26) [Show picture from children's bible.]

They were some of the first Christians. Some people didn't want Christians in their country. The government ordered all Christians to leave. So Priscilla and Aquila were forced to move.

It couldn't have been easy. Leaving their home, their friends, their church, and their business. But they *did* leave. Priscilla and Aquila travelled from their home in Rome, Italy. They fled to Corinth, Greece. [Show on map or globe.]

They were tent makers. In those days that was



PHOTO #3A



PHOTO #3B



PHOTO #3C

a great skill to have. And Greece needed good tent makers. They started their own business and even hired other workers. So Priscilla and Aquilla really helped their new community.

And not only that. They brought their Christian faith to Greece. They told lots of people about Jesus. They started a church there and it grew and grew.

It's not easy being a refugee. Especially at the beginning. [Show picture #3A- fleeing \*\*]

But, when they get settled somewhere they carry on. They have lots to offer.

[Show picture #3B — at a camp; Show picture #3C — Peace By Chocolate — or a relevant picture from your community.]

It can be exciting to see refugees come to a new place. Not only can they help themselves, they also help others. They bring skills and things that help make our community even better — like chocolate!

Just like my flower — now that it's growing

again. It looks beautiful.

It can be part of a garden— God's garden!

That's what God designed. It even says in Revelation — right at the end of our Bible:

**“After this I looked and saw ... from every nation, tribe, people and language.”**

Heaven will be like this. And we have some heaven on earth now. That's what God wants — for our world to be like this — like a garden of people from everywhere.

So our garden can look like this [Show picture #3D — a garden with variety of colours and sizes of flowers], rather than just this [Show picture #3E - garden with all the same colour and type of flower.] We're going to talk more about this in our groups.



PHOTO #3D



PHOTO #3E



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

CHILDREN CAN BE GROUPED BY AGE INTO SMALLER GROUPS OR OFFERED A CHOICE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES SET UP AS ACTIVITY CENTRES. COLOURING SHEETS FOR THE BIBLE STORY AND THE BIBLE VERSES ARE PROVIDED AS AN 'EXTRA' FOR CHILDREN WHO WISH THEM.

### Activity Resources

On the following pages (after the photos for the lesson), you will find:

- Colouring pages
- Rainbow and flowers activity sheet

### Discuss:

- Diversity needs lots of colour
- Refugees have so much to offer. Find examples
- Variety makes a community better. It results in new things, new ideas new friends.

### Do:

 <b>FOR YOUNG CHILDREN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rainbow garden mural to make — on a long strip of butcher paper — add tissue paper (need: mural paper, crayons or markers, construction paper or tissue paper, scissors, glue)</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• smaller version of their own (need: crayons or markers, tissue paper, glue, stickers)</li> </ul> <p>For both: Write “From every nation, tribe, people, language” as a caption</p>
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 <p>FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about the symbol of the pot as being a safe place to live - a 'refuge' and paint pots (in preparation for planting next week). Have a variety of colours to use. Flowers and rainbows as designs will help to solidify this week's teaching. Add verse "From every nation..." with marker on the side of the pot. (need: paint, brushes, plant pots, permanent marker)</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Rainbow and flowers" activity page (need: markers or crayons, tissue paper, glue)</li> </ul>
 <p>FOR OLDER CHILDREN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read passages related to Priscilla and Aquila.</li> <li>• Introduce context: map of the Mediterranean; persecution of Christians in Rome; fleeing to Greece</li> <li>• Talk about why they had to leave and what they contributed.</li> <li>• Tell a story of your own ancestors (if you are not indigenous). Why did they have to leave? What have they contributed to Canada?</li> <li>• Discuss refugees today: why they have to leave and what they have to contribute? (need: map or globe, bible)</li> </ul>



## CLOSING

In small groups or with everyone together, photograph or record their messages and forward the photos, audio messages or videos to community or national agencies who can share them with the refugees and newcomers they work with. (See Appendix)

### Share

- Photograph their work for sharing
- Consider sharing chocolate.

### Pray

- for refugees - be with them as they leave dangerous situations
- give them strength to make the right decisions
- give thanks to God for what they have to offer our community

### At Home

BE SURE THE CHILDREN TAKE THEIR WORK HOME TO SHARE WITH THEIR FAMILIES. INCLUDE THE PARENT LETTER, INCLUDED ON THE NEXT PAGE. (EDIT AS YOU WISH)

Dear Parents,

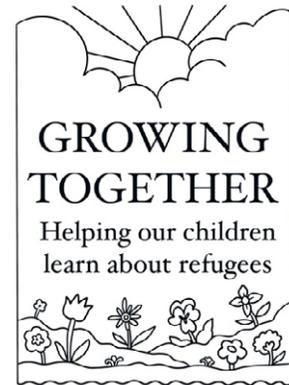
Today your child heard the story of Priscilla and Aquila. These were the basic learnings:

- it must be hard for refugees to have to leave their homes.
- they know that they need to leave — they know what they need to do.
- when refugees move to a safer place they do better — they can grow and be the people God planned for them to be.
- they have a lot to contribute.
- our communities are better when we have them here — they add variety and diversity.

In class your child coloured a rainbow garden / painted a pot in preparation for next week / talked about contributions immigrants have made to our community.

At home, you could:

- **PRAY** — include prayers for refugees at mealtime
- **TALK ABOUT** — be on the lookout for news items that talk about refugees who've made a difference in the community and in our country eg. Peace By Chocolate, Paramount Restaurants, etc. Emphasize that we are better together! (You can learn about Peace By Chocolate at [peacebychocolate.ca/pages/our-story](http://peacebychocolate.ca/pages/our-story))
- **MAKE AND DO** — purchase some food from another country at a shop owned by a new arrival to Canada. Talk about variety. Make rainbows. Eat chocolate!
- **READ** — books about diversity, eg. *The Day the Crayons Quit*, or "The Box of Crayons" poem





GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - PHOTO #3A - CREDIT: IAFR USA / TOM ALBINSON



GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - PHOTO #3B — CREDIT: IAFR USA / TOM ALBINSON



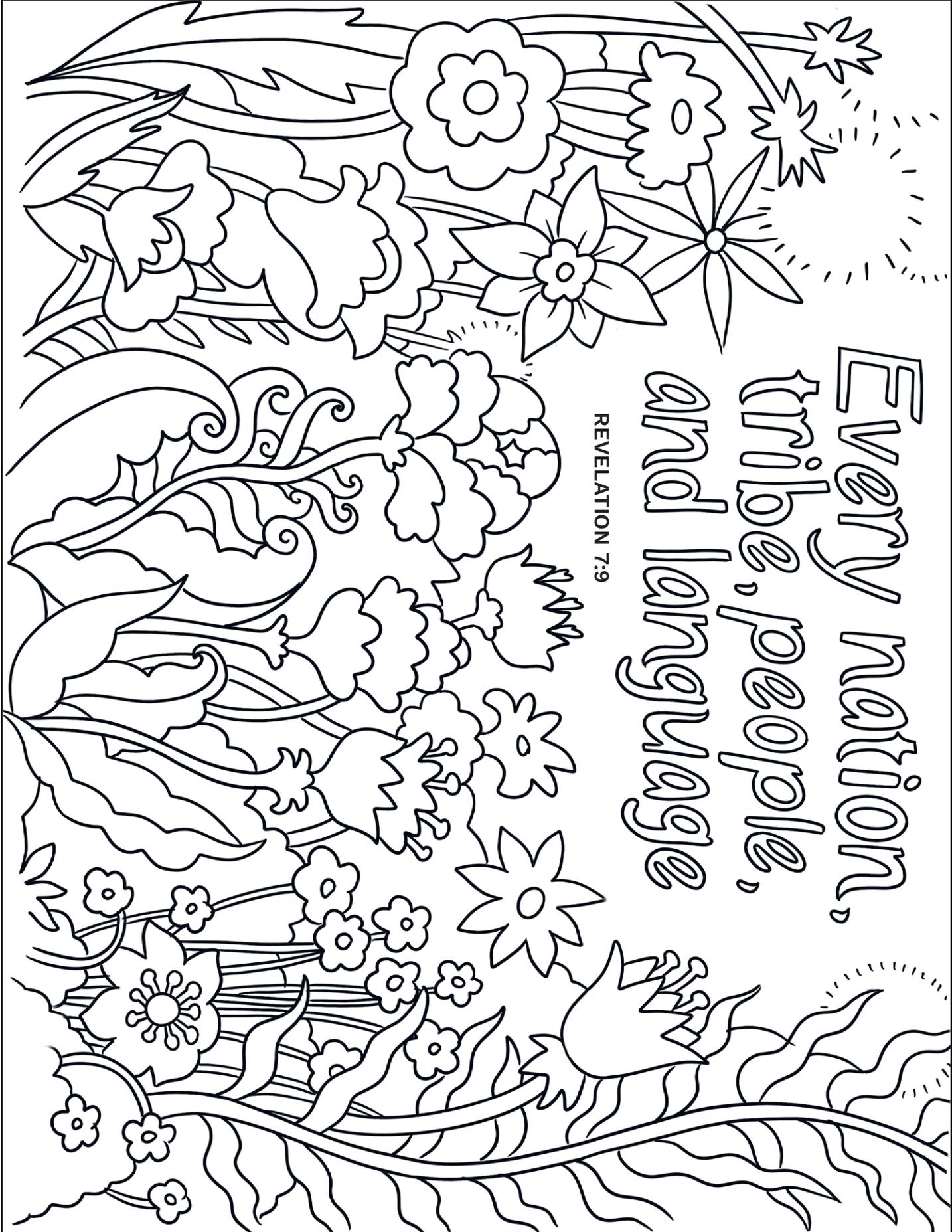
GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - PHOTO #3C — CREDIT: PEACE BY CHOCOLATE



GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - PHOTO #3D — CREDIT: ISTOCK / DVOEVNORE



GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - PHOTO #3E — CREDIT: ISTOCK / ROBERT RUIDL

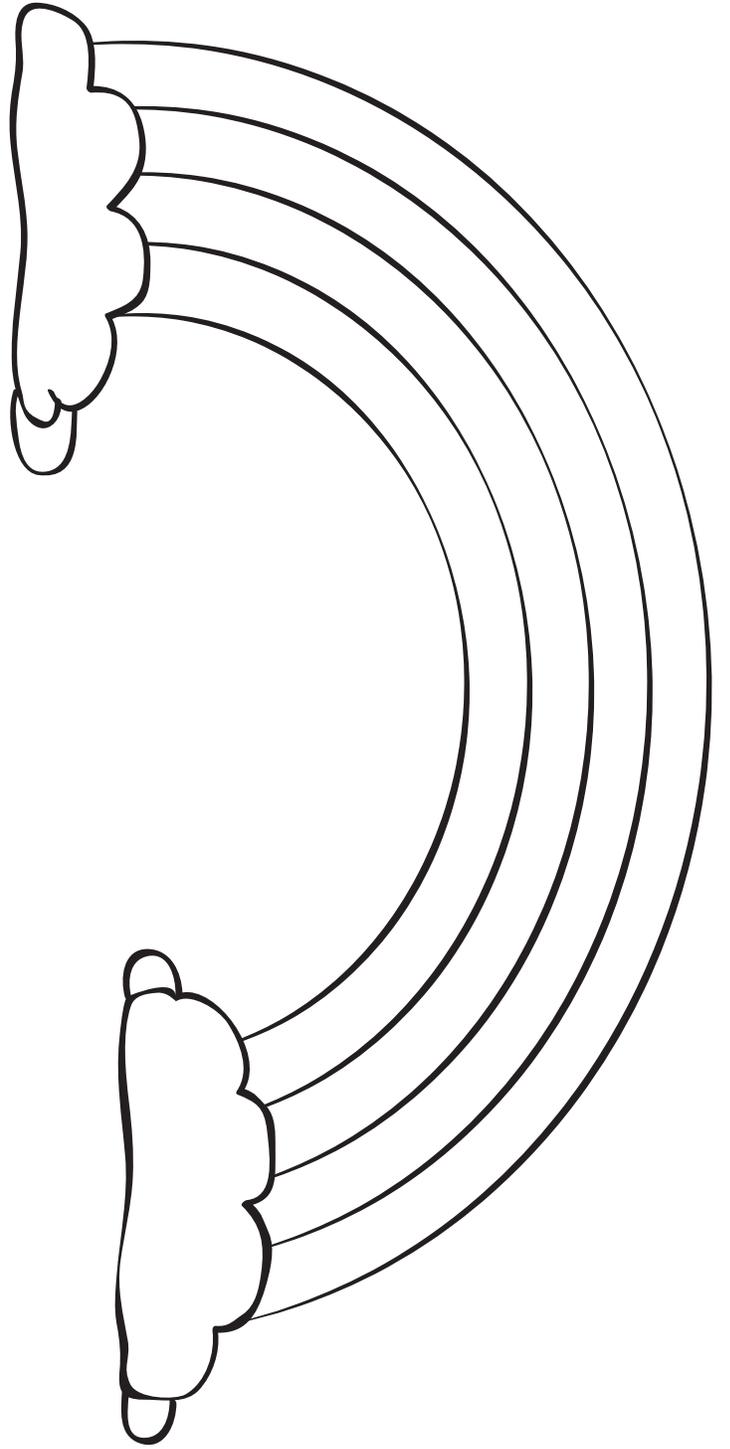


Every nation,  
tribe, people,  
and language

REVELATION 7:9



**Priscilla and Aquilla became leaders in their new community**  
**ACTS 18:1-4, 24-26**



## LESSON FOUR

# Hospitality

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**Theme:** We can extend hospitality to refugees

**Bible Story:** Naomi, Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 1)

**Bible Verse:** Offer hospitality to one another — 1 Peter 4:9



### INTRODUCTION / CHILDREN'S SERMON / FOCUS

ALL AGES TOGETHER ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE CHURCH CONGREGATION, DEPENDING ON CHURCH'S FORMAT

- Materials Needed:**
- plant,
  - the word "Hospitality" written on a large piece of paper,
  - today's bible verse printed on a large piece of paper,
  - story bible marked at the story of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz,
  - picture #4 and message

#### Suggested script:

We have been talking about my plant. Remember the bad soil — it had to be transplanted to somewhere safe — it seems to be doing well in its new pot doesn't it?

We've also been talking about refugees — people who have to move to somewhere safer — sometimes they go somewhere temporarily (like a refugee camp) while they wait, eventually may get somewhere more permanent.

But no matter where they are, who remembers what do they need? [Review of what has been discussed before.]

Yes, those are all great ideas. They also need kindness — to feel welcome — to feel like they belong.

[Show picture #4A] I'd like to introduce you to Sylvia. Listen to her message [Read message 4]: ***"It makes a huge difference to me to be welcome by Canadians because of where I was coming from, Italy. I was so amazed the way Canadians treated me with kindness and love. In a nutshell, Canadians welcomed me with open arms, and I have never be treated like an immigrant. God bless the people for all they have been doing for us, I really see God's love through them."***

Today's Bible story is about Naomi, Ruth and Boaz. Ruth and Naomi were also refugees. There was a famine — there was no food. Nothing could grow. They had to leave their country and move to a new land.

When Ruth and Naomi got there, they were welcomed. A man named Boaz greeted them, helped them and made them feel at home. That made all the difference. They stayed. And Ruth and Naomi went on to be important people in our faith story. In fact, Ruth married Boaz and they became the grandparents of David who went on to become the King of Israel (But that's another story for another time!!)

We've learned that refugees are people who have to leave their homes. We've learned that they are people who are courageous, who have lots to offer, who want their lives to make a difference. And we've learned that we can welcome them with kindness.

Refugees — whether they live in our community, or in other countries in refugee camps — all need a welcome, all need kindness.

Today I have a new word for you. It's a long one. Are you ready? [Show sign] "Hospitality". Have



PHOTO #4A

you heard that word before?

Hospitality means making people feel at home. Making people feel welcome. Helping people to know that they belong.

There are lots of ways to show people that they are welcome. This plant came to me because I had started a new job. My workmates wanted me to feel at home, to feel welcome. They were showing me hospitality.

Now that we understand a bit more about newcomers we can reach out. Offer hospitality.

[Show the bible verse.] The bible even says: 1

Peter 4:9 *Offer hospitality to one another.*

We can make a newcomer feel welcome when they come to our home.

We can make someone feel welcome if they move onto our street or come to our church.

We can make a newcomer feel welcome at school or on the playground.

We'll talk about this more in our groups ... And today our pots are ready. We're ready to plant the flowers. And then we will have one more way to welcome someone and show hospitality — by offering them the gift of a plant.

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES



CHILDREN CAN BE GROUPED BY AGE INTO SMALLER GROUPS OR OFFERED A CHOICE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES SET UP AS ACTIVITY CENTRES. COLOURING SHEETS FOR THE BIBLE STORY AND THE BIBLE VERSES ARE PROVIDED AS AN 'EXTRA' FOR CHILDREN WHO WISH THEM.

### Activity Resources

On the following pages (after the photo for the introduction), you will find:

- Colouring pages
- Welcome mat to colour
- "Open the door" activity sheet

### Discuss:

- How can we make people feel welcome? How can we show hospitality?
- Have large pieces of paper on the wall with an outline of a home, a school and a church on each. Children can contribute ideas and the lists can be kept up and added to for several weeks to come.

AS CHILDREN WORK, THEY CAN TAKE TURNS PLANTING DIFFERENT KINDS OF FLOWERS INTO THE POTS. THESE PLANTS ARE TO BE SHARED WITH REFUGEE AND NEWCOMER FAMILIES OR LEFT WITH COMMUNITY AGENCIES WHO SUPPORT THEM.

### Do:

 FOR YOUNG CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craft: house with a door that opens — to show welcome</li> <li>• (need: scissors, crayons)</li> </ul>
 FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read or view the book <i>From Far Away</i>, by Robert Munsch</li> <li>• Role play ways to welcome refugees at school</li> <li>• Create a group book called "I can show hospitality at school" with each child contributing an idea and illustrating it on a page. Staple together with a cover. (need: paper, crayons, pencils, stapler)</li> </ul>



FOR OLDER CHILDREN

- Brainstorm ways to welcome others at school. Record examples.
- Review today's bible verse
  - » add 'without grumbling'
  - » discuss why this part is important!
- welcome mat to colour  
(need: markers, pencil crayons or crayons)



## CLOSING

In small groups or with everyone together, photograph or record their messages and forward the photos, audio messages or videos to community or national agencies who can share them with the refugees and newcomers they work with. (See Appendix)

### Share

- review the hospitality ideas together on the three charts and add more ideas as necessary
- photograph their crafts and group work
- take pictures of the plants in their pots

### Pray

- for refugees — be with them as they leave dangerous situations
- give thanks to God for what they have to offer our community
- pray that we will find ways to show them hospitality

## AT HOME

BE SURE THE CHILDREN TAKE THEIR WORK HOME TO SHARE WITH THEIR FAMILIES. INCLUDE THE PARENT LETTER, INCLUDED ON THE NEXT PAGE. (EDIT AS YOU WISH)

Dear Parents,

Today your child learned about the story of Ruth and Naomi and explored the meaning of the word hospitality.

These were the basic learnings:

- we can welcome refugees when they come to our community — to our neighbourhood, to our school, to our church
- there are many ways to show hospitality

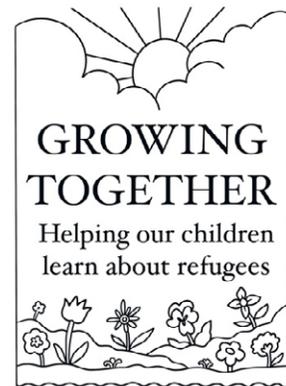
In class your child planted flowers in pots. These will be shared with organizations who work with refugees and given as welcome gifts.

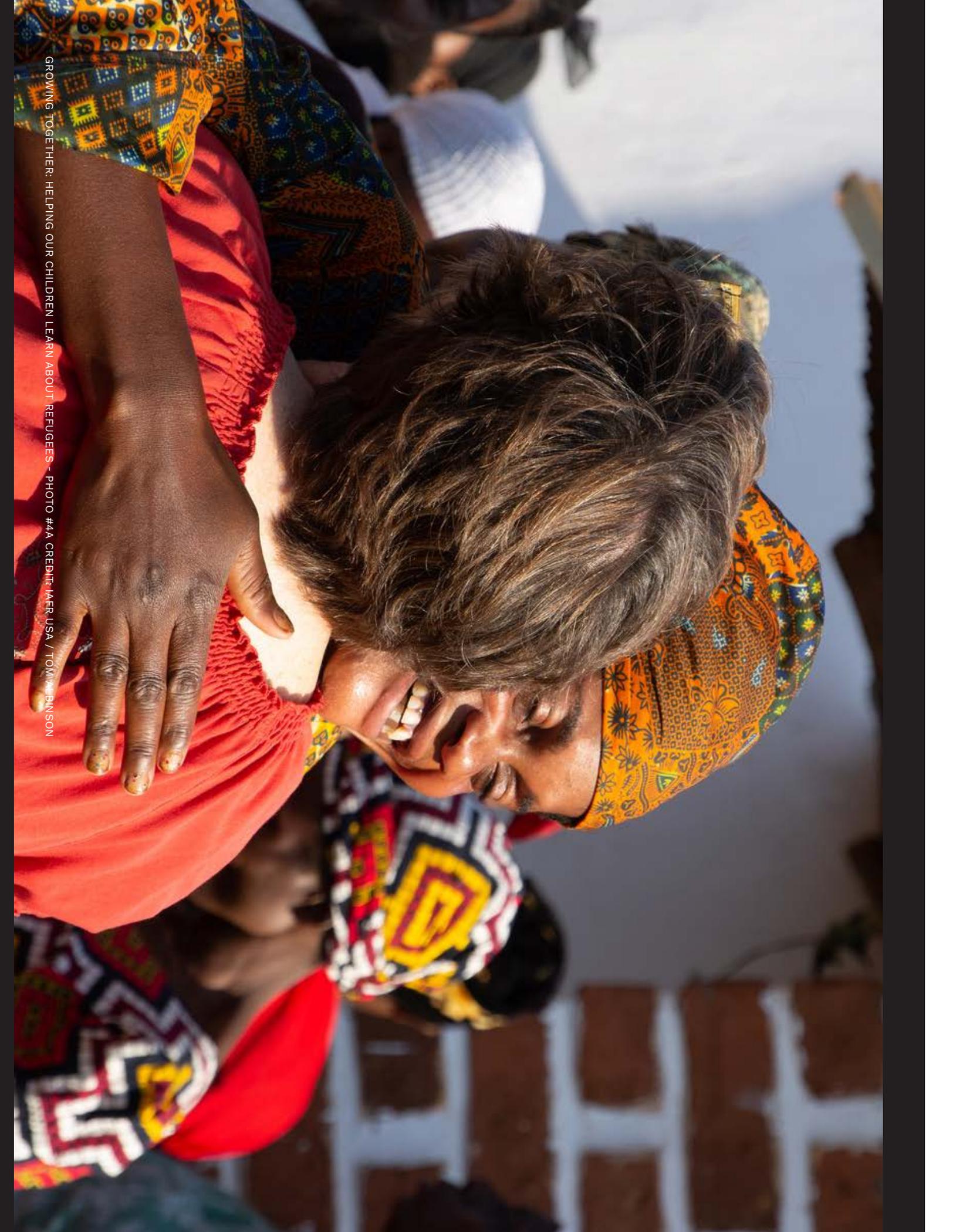
At home, you could:

- **PRAY** — continue to include prayers for refugees at mealtimes
- **TALK ABOUT** — ways you can show hospitality to others in your home, your street and your church
- **MAKE AND DO** — [sabbathschoolcrafts.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/christian-hospitality-coloring-book-for-kids.pdf](http://sabbathschoolcrafts.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/christian-hospitality-coloring-book-for-kids.pdf)

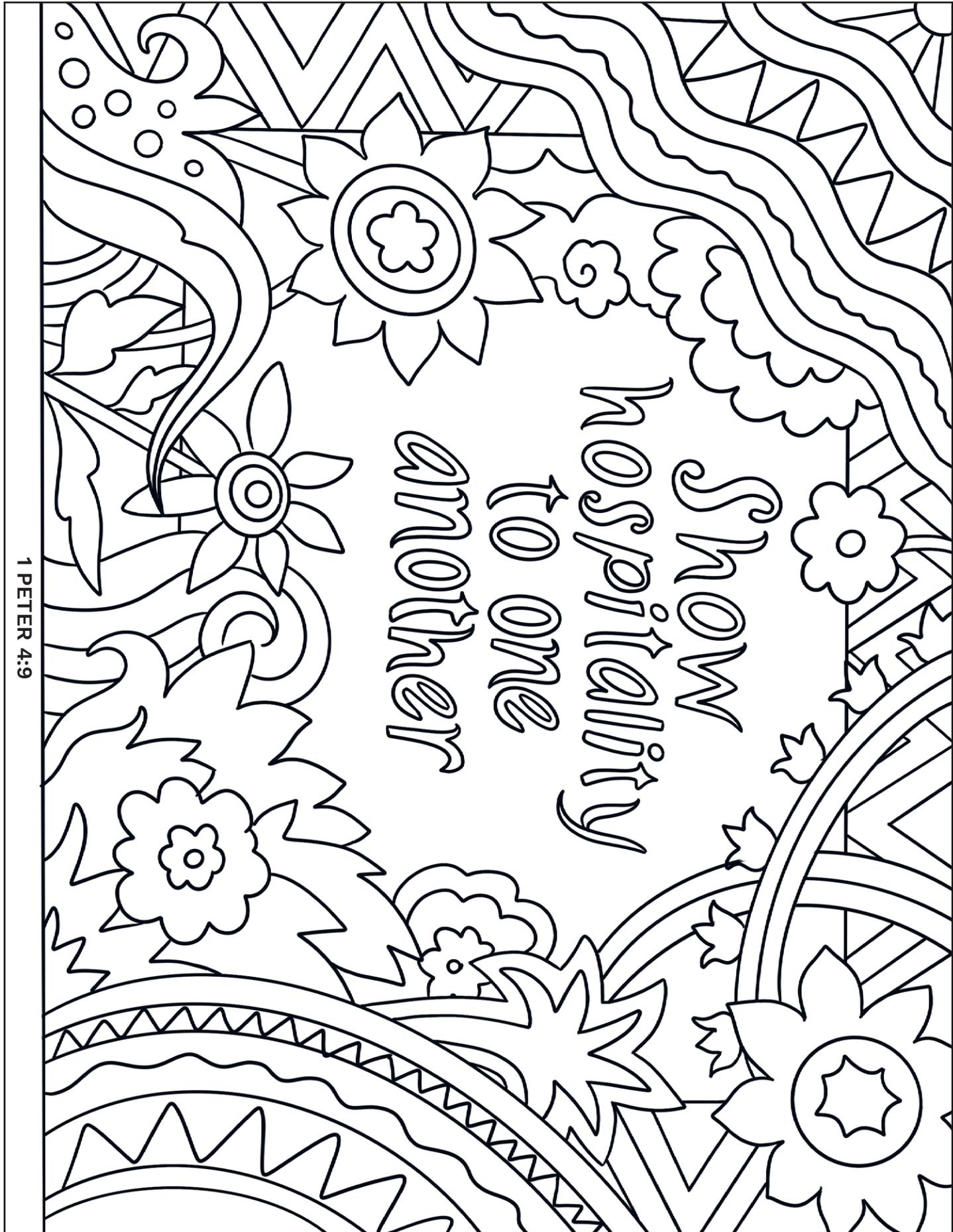
We hope that you and your family have enjoyed these refugee learning experiences.

Thank you for participating!

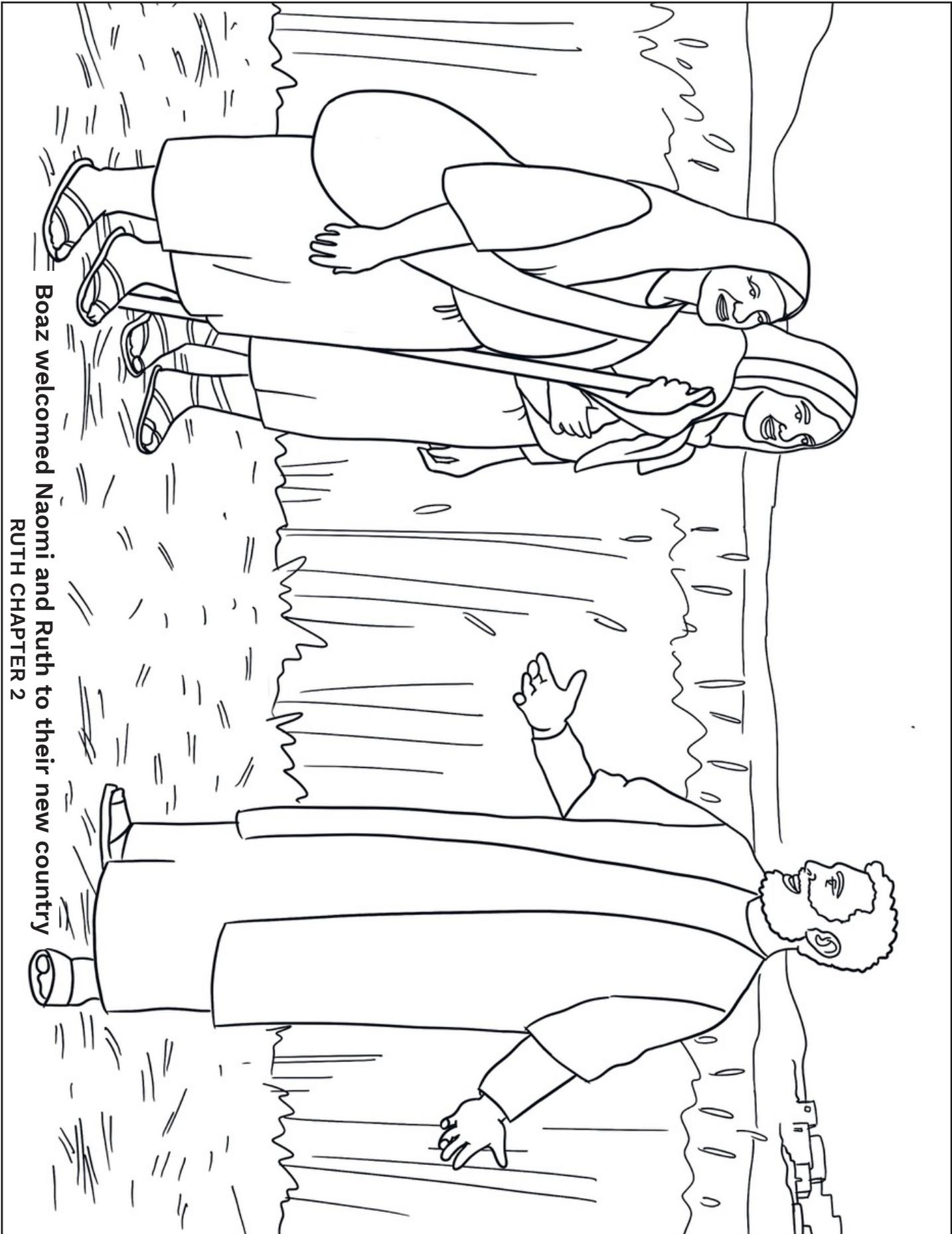




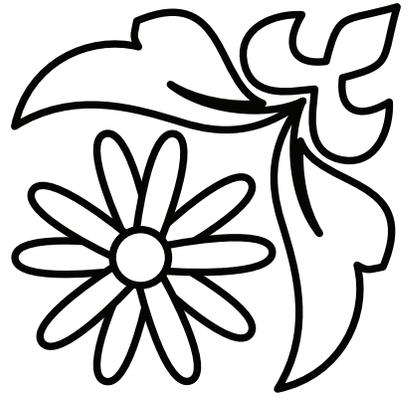
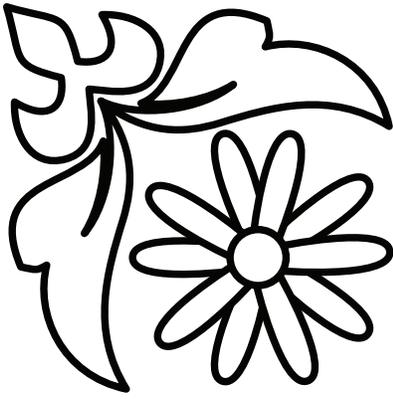
GROWING TOGETHER: HELPING OUR CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT REFUGEES - PHOTO #4A CREDIT: IAFR USA / TOM MANNINSON



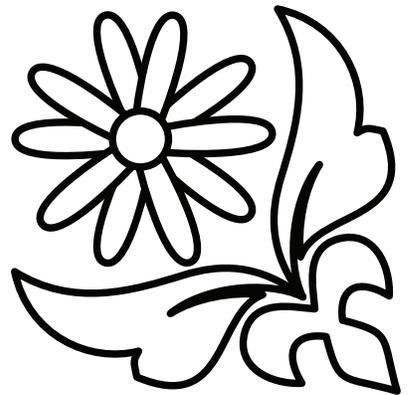
1 PETER 4:9

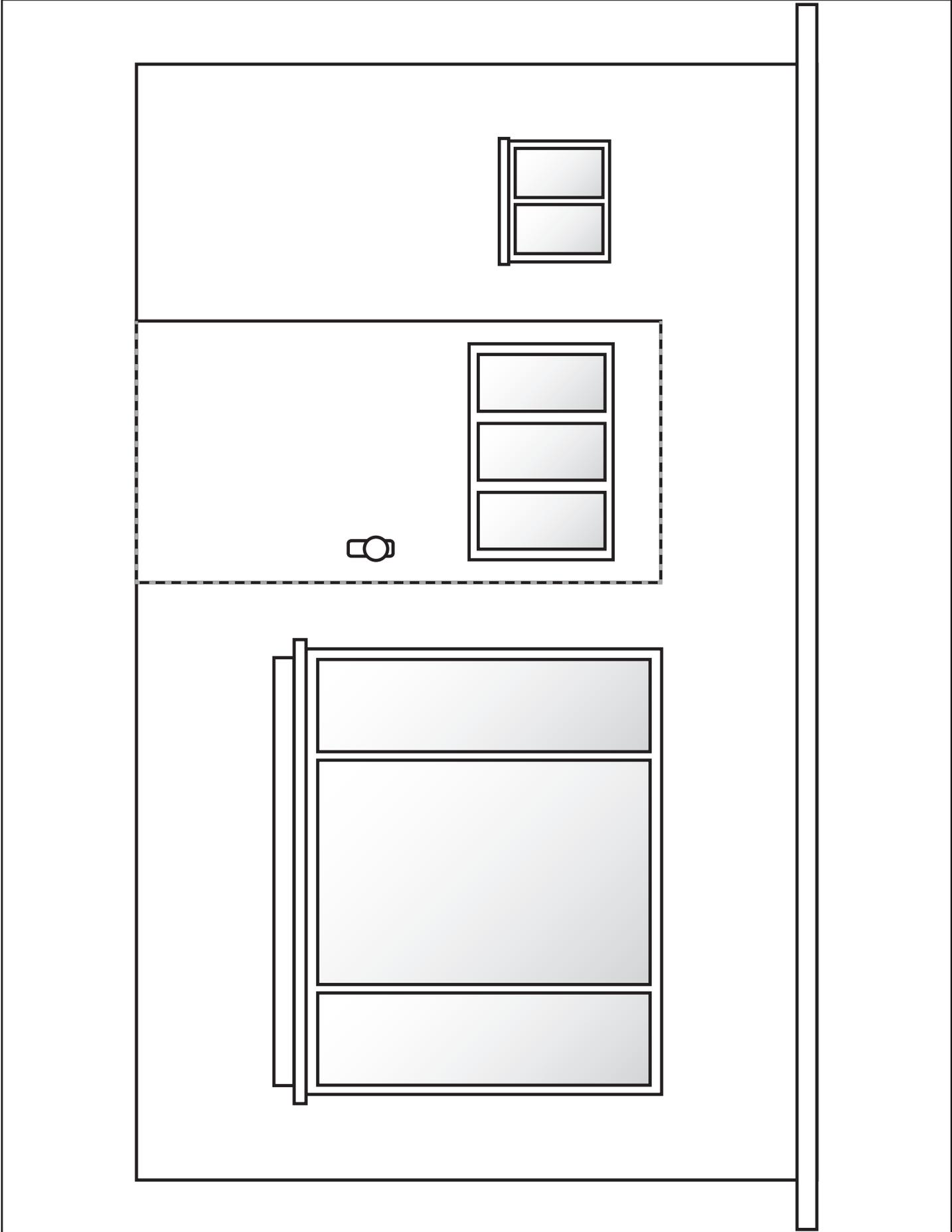


Boaz welcomed Naomi and Ruth to their new country  
RUTH CHAPTER 2



WELCOME





## APPENDIX

# Resources

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### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO CONNECT WITH

#### IAFR Canada local projects:

- Open Homes Hamilton: [info@openhomeshamilton.ca](mailto:info@openhomeshamilton.ca) Ph: 289-426-2612
- Refugee Support in Winnipeg: [info@iafr.ca](mailto:info@iafr.ca)
- The Peoples House, Toronto: [info@ThePeoplesChurch.ca](mailto:info@ThePeoplesChurch.ca) Ph: 416.499.4209
- Refugee Children: Nomads Program, Toronto: [info@iafr.ca](mailto:info@iafr.ca)

#### Micah House (Hamilton)

[www.micahhouse.ca](http://www.micahhouse.ca)  
[info@micahhouse.ca](mailto:info@micahhouse.ca) Ph: 905-296-4387

#### Matthew House Fort Erie

[matthewhouseforterie.com](http://matthewhouseforterie.com)  
[matthewhfe@gmail.com](mailto:matthewhfe@gmail.com) Ph: 905-871-6059

#### Matthew House Windsor

[www.matthewhousewindsor.org](http://www.matthewhousewindsor.org)  
[info@matthewhousewindsor.org](mailto:info@matthewhousewindsor.org) Ph: 519-945-7627

#### Matthew House Ottawa

[www.matthewhouseottawa.org](http://www.matthewhouseottawa.org)  
[info@matthewhouseottawa.org](mailto:info@matthewhouseottawa.org) Ph: 613-212-1499

#### Matthew House Toronto

[www.matthewhouse.ca](http://www.matthewhouse.ca)  
[gisela@matthewhouse.ca](mailto:gisela@matthewhouse.ca) Ph: 647-694-9293

#### Adam House (Toronto)

[www.adamhouse.org](http://www.adamhouse.org)  
[info@adamhouse.org](mailto:info@adamhouse.org) Ph: 416-538-3416

#### Christie Refugee Welcome Centre (Toronto)

[www.christiestreetrc.com](http://www.christiestreetrc.com) Ph: 416-588-9277

#### Naomi House (Winnipeg):

[www.naomihouse.info](http://www.naomihouse.info) Ph: 204-415-1752

#### Kinbrace Refugee Housing and Support (Vancouver)

[kinbrace.ca](http://kinbrace.ca)  
[info@kinbrace.ca](mailto:info@kinbrace.ca) Ph: 604.255.9691

#### Journey Home Community (Metro Vancouver)

[www.journeyhomecommunity.ca](http://www.journeyhomecommunity.ca)  
[info@journeyhomecommunity.ca](mailto:info@journeyhomecommunity.ca) Ph: 604.568.4892

There are many other private and government funded agencies that support refugees in cities across Canada. An internet search for 'settlement agencies' or 'refugee support services' or 'refugee claimant services' should help you find them.

### RESOURCES OF INTEREST TO ADULTS

#### Introduction to the Refugee Highway

[vimeo.com/showcase/5950962/video/432912266](https://vimeo.com/showcase/5950962/video/432912266)

A 6.5 minute video giving a powerful overview of global refugee realities along with a biblical perspective. Statistics from UNHCR Global Trends 2019, published June, 2020.

#### Refugees in the Bible

A tool to help you ponder biblical stories that include forced displacement. [www.iafr.org/toolbox](http://www.iafr.org/toolbox)

#### Human Flow (2017)

Trailer: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=z\\_YbgOZYrOc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_YbgOZYrOc)

A powerful documentary filmed and produced by AI Weiwei about the current global refugee crisis. In the film

the viewer is taken to over 20 countries to understand both the scale and the personal impact of this massive human migration. Available to view/rent for viewing on YouTube, Amazon Prime Video and other online platforms.

#### Peace by Chocolate: The Hadhad family's remarkable journey from Syria to Canada

by Jon Tattrie (2020)

This book tells the extraordinary story of the Hadhad family and the founding of their business, Peace by Chocolate. From the devastation of the Syrian civil war, through their life as refugees in Lebanon, to their arrival in a small town in Atlantic Canada, Peace by Chocolate is the story of one family who came to Canada as sponsored

refugees. It is also the story of the people of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, who welcomed strangers and helped them face the challenges of settling in a new place.

### **UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)**

[www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/](http://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/)

### **World Vision: How to talk to kids about refugees**

[www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/how-to-talk-kids-about-refugees](http://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/how-to-talk-kids-about-refugees)

**BOOKS FOR CHILDREN** MOST OF THESE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN YOUR PUBLIC LIBRARY. SUMMARIES ARE ADAPTED FROM PUBLISHER AND DISTRIBUTOR BLURBS.

#### **For children aged 3-6**

##### **My Two Blankets**

by Irene Kobald (2015)

Tells the story of a refugee from Africa and how she makes a new friend by sharing her language, one word at a time. This story about the refugee resettlement experience also has themes about friendship and dealing with change.

##### **What is a Refugee?**

by Elise Gravel (2019)

A colourful picture book that simply and graphically introduces the term "refugee" to curious young children to help them better understand the world in which they live. Answers questions such as: Who are refugees? Why are they called that word? Why do they need to leave their country? Why are they sometimes not welcome in their new country?

##### **The Color of Home**

by Mary Hoffman (2012)

This picture book follows Hassan through his first few days at school. Hassan has only recently arrived in the United States after he and his family were forced to flee

Somalia. He deeply misses the colorful landscape of his former home in Africa. Hassan finds that by painting a picture of his old home and sharing his story, his homesickness and the trauma of leaving a war-torn country are lessened. And he finds that there are many things to like about his new home in America. There are additional resources available online to accompany this book. Check out: [childrenslibrarylady.com/the-colour-of-home](http://childrenslibrarylady.com/the-colour-of-home)

##### **The Journey**

by Francesca Sanna (2016)

Tells the story of a family that flees after their father is killed in a war. It's an intense book with an uncertain ending, but a good one for building compassion. Use it to help children engage in conversation and generate questions.

##### **Small finds a Home**

by Karin Celestine (2016)

A cute book featuring various felt animals. It has a beautiful message about friendship, sharing, and putting others before yourself.

#### **For children aged 6-9**

##### **Four Feet, Two Sandals**

by Karen Lynn Williams & Khadra Mohammed, illustrated by Doug Chayka (2007)

This story is set in a refugee camp on the Pakistan-Afghani border. It is a poignant picture book with themes of compassion, friendship and creating a sense of belonging. There are additional resources available to accompany this book available online (do a google search) including several read aloud versions on youtube. Here is one of them. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4NLYmiriME>

written in 1995 but new artwork was done in 2017. You can listen to the audio book here: <https://robertmunsch.com/book/from-far-away#> or see and hear it read here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVAZCb2qjI4>

##### **Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey**

by Doug Kuntz and Amy Shrodes (2017)

This book tells the true story of how one family took their cat with them when they fled Iraq. On the way to Greece, a frightened Kunkush escapes, and the family has to continue on without him. When aid workers find Kunkush, they work to reunite him with his family. This book introduces children to the basics of how and why people leave their country as well as the ways that people help along the way.

##### **From Far Away**

by Robert Munsch and Saoussan Askar (1995/2017)

Saoussan tells the true story of her family's flight from war-ridden Lebanon. She wrote a letter to Robert Munsch, and together they made her letter into this book. Originally

### **When I Get Older: The Story Behind “Wavin’ Flag”**

by K’naan, illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez (2012)

Somali-Canadian poet, rapper, singer, and songwriter K’naan tells his own story. Born in Somalia, he grew up in Mogadishu. His mother made the difficult decision to move her family so that they could grow up in safety. First in New York and then in Toronto, K’naan faced many challenges.

Like so many other immigrants, he had to make a place for himself in a world of alien customs, clothes, and language. Not only does K’naan tell a story that will inspire and encourage young readers, but he provides a brief history of the Somali conflict. The lyrics of “Wavin’ Flag” are also included. The song was adapted again to become the FIFA World Cup theme song. There are now twenty-two versions of the song, which hit #1 in nineteen countries.

### **Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family’s Journey**

by Margriet Ruur

Stepping Stones has illustrations inspired by the artwork of Syrian artist Nizar Ali Badr, which the author uses to tell the story of a family fleeing Syria. It’s a powerful use of art to tell the story of the Syrian civil war and how it affected families. (story is written in both English and Arabic)

**For older children aged 9 - 12**

### **Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan**

by Loretta Scott King (2005)

This book tells the story of eight-year-old Garag, who escapes Sudan by walking through Ethiopia and Kenya, eventually getting to the US. This book deals with a tough subject in a delicate but honest way.

### **My Name is Sangoel**

by Karen Williams (2009)

Sangoel is a refugee. Leaving behind his homeland of Sudan, where his father died in the war, he has little to call his own other than his name, a Dinka name handed down proudly from his father and grandfather. When Sangoel and his mother and sister arrive in the United States, everything seems very strange and unlike home. In this busy, noisy place, with its escalators and television sets and traffic and snow, Sangoel quietly endures the fact that no one can pronounce his name. Lonely and homesick, he finally comes up with an ingenious solution to this problem, and in the process he at last begins to feel at home. Here is a YouTube link to the story being read aloud [www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTW4iiejDoc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTW4iiejDoc)

### **Where Will I live?**

by Rosemary McCarney

Written by Canada’s Ambassador to the United Nations, this book will help children whose lives are not directly affected by the refugee crisis think about the importance of home, and what life is like for a child refugee who does not have a permanent, safe home. Full of beautiful photographs and includes images of children on the move and in refugee camps in countries such as Rwanda, Iraq, Niger, Hungary, South Sudan, & Greece.

### **The Doll**

by Nhung N. Tran-Davies, illustrated by Ravy Puth (2021)

A young girl and her family arrive in an airport in a new country. They are refugees, migrants who have travelled across the world to find safety. Strangers greet them, and one of them gives the little girl a doll. Decades later, that little girl is grown up and she has the chance to welcome a group of refugees who are newly arrived in her adopted country. To the youngest of them, a little girl, she gives a doll, knowing it will help make her feel welcome. Inspired by real events.

### **The Red Pencil**

by Andrew Pinkney

*The Red Pencil* tells the story of a Sudanese refugee who leaves her village after experiencing the horror of Janjaweed attackers. During her stay at a refugee camp, she starts to become pessimistic until a red pencil starts to open her up to possibility and hope.

### **Escape from Aleppo by N. H. Senzai**

As civil war rages in Syria and bombs fall across Nadia’s home city of Aleppo, her family decides to flee to safety. Inspired by current events, this novel sheds light on the complicated situation in Syria that has led to an international refugee crisis, and tells the story of one girl’s journey to safety.

### **Kiki and Jacques**

by Susan Ross

Twelve-year-old Jacques is already experiencing a lot of change in his life, including the death of his mother, when several Somali refugees move to his small town in Maine. Suddenly, Jacques has competition on the soccer team, and there are other growing pains — for both the locals and refugees — as their community becomes a multicultural one. When Jacques strikes up a friendship with Kiki, one of the refugees, his world begins to expand.

## **VIDEOS FOR CHILDREN**

BE SURE TO PREVIEW FOR SUITABILITY FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

### **Refugee Life: Through a Child's Eyes**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkkVnQEB1mE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkkVnQEB1mE)

### **What is a refugee? from Save the Children Australia**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRk8eaW3X1Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRk8eaW3X1Y)

### **Who is a Refugee?**

by UNHCR

[www.unhcr.org/teaching-materials-ages-6-9.html](http://www.unhcr.org/teaching-materials-ages-6-9.html)