

General Church Education



The First Day

Genesis 1:1-5

Lesson 1

Youth Journey Program

Creation: Reflection of God

Level B: For ages 7-10 years

Teacher Background

Creation: Reflecting God through Correspondences

A Key for Understanding the Word

There is a New Church teaching that, “The Word of God is like a body with a living soul” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1408). Many readers have sensed this deeper level of meaning within the words and images of the Bible.

God wrote His Word so that every image contains multiple levels of meaning. The literal meaning focuses on the natural, physical world. A deeper symbolic meaning focuses on the world of the spirit, the world of the human mind. The relationship between the two levels is called “correspondence”. Natural images and symbols “correspond” to spiritual qualities.

We often make this connection between levels without thinking about it. For example, we may talk about not “muddying the waters”, or say that a child is “testing the waters”. When we say “not muddying the waters” we are not talking about water at all; we are saying that false or misleading ideas should not be brought into a situation. Similarly, a child “testing the waters” is experimenting with his or her behavior to see how others react. These sayings make connections between the way true ideas work in our minds with the way water works in the natural world.

Jesus made connections like this in His conversations with people. To a woman at Jacob’s well, He said, “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). Jesus was associating the true spiritual ideas He came on earth to teach with water. The connection is in how they are useful—how they work in our lives. True ideas from the Word cleanse our thoughts just as water cleanses our bodies.

Sometimes these connections are harder to see in the stories of the Old Testament. The key, according to the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church, is this concept of correspondences. Correspondences allow us to see more than the general allegory of the human journey to the “promised land” of heaven. They help us see who God is and what He intends for us in specific ways. A knowledge of correspondences can help us gain fresh insight into the stories of the Old Testament.

This is true for the creation story. The Heavenly Doctrine explains creation in terms of a person’s step-by-step spiritual progress along the path to heaven. Each “day” of creation pictures a new level of personal development. The seventh day is a beautiful picture of the restful state of heaven—a state free from the struggles against selfishness that we all deal with in this world.

The spiritual meanings of the days of creation are interwoven throughout this lesson. We hope they bring this familiar story to life in new ways.

Correspondences are natural truths in which spiritual truths are reflected as in a mirror. *Arcana Coelestia* 9300



The First Day

Level B

Genesis 1:1-5

Ages 7-10

Life Focus: The Lord made me and wants me to live with Him in heaven.

Lesson Focus: The Word connects the world around us with heavenly ideas. It begins with the story of creation, which is about how the Lord can make us ready for heaven.

Reading: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day (Genesis 1:1-5).

Lesson 1

		Materials Supplied	Materials Needed
1. Getting Started (2-3 minutes)	Welcome Warm-up Activity	Light in Darkness directions p. 4	dark closet or bathroom; <i>optional:</i> flashlight
2. Focus on the Word Use all activities (5-7 minutes)	Read the Word	see <i>Reading</i> above illustration p. 10	
	Talk About It discuss the reading	Talk About It discussion guide p. 4	
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Experiment fill a plastic bottle with oil and colored water; shake together and watch them separate	Light and Darkness Experiment directions p. 5 video at https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-light-and-darkness-experiment/	recycled plastic bottle for each child, water, blue or black washable markers or paint, oil (baby/mineral or vegetable), duct tape, disposable plastic cup to use as a pour spout
	Moving Picture hide a radiant fan of “light” inside a black paper oval; open the “darkness” and reveal the “light”	Let There Be Light directions p. 5-6 <i>Darkness Template</i> p. 11 <i>Light Fan Template</i> p. 12 <i>Let there be light</i> p. 13	a piece of black paper for each child, tape, scissors, <i>optional:</i> glue, glitter
	Coloring Picture	The First Day p. 15	crayons, markers or colored pencils
4. Wrap It Up (2-3 minutes)	Memory Verse introduce memory verse for the week	Memory Verse <i>Parent Note</i> p. 16	

1. Getting Started

Welcome	Light in Darkness
Warm-up Activity	Have you ever been in complete darkness? Let's find a dark place so we can see what it is like. Take the children to a closet or hallway that can be completely darkened and is large enough to fit everyone comfortably. Turn out the lights. What do you notice? Encourage the children to notice sounds, smells, the warmth of others. Now imagine what it must have been like when the Lord created light. Open the door or turn on the light. What is different? What can we do in the light that is difficult to do in the dark?

2. Focus on the Word

Read	Genesis 1:1-5
Talk About It	<p>Show the children a copy of the Bible or Word. What book is this? Answers may vary. The key is for them to know that it is the Lord's book. He has written it so we can know Him. He is our Heavenly Father.</p> <p>The Word is in two parts or testaments. Can you name them? The Old Testament (containing the law and the prophets) and the New Testament (which tells how the Lord came into the world as the Lord God Jesus Christ). <i>Show</i> the first page of the Old Testament and of the New Testament.</p> <p>The Word connects the world around us with heavenly ideas. It is written in parables and has two levels of meaning—the first level of meaning is the stories we read. The second, inner, meaning is about the life of our minds, spirits or souls.</p> <p>The Word begins with Genesis. Genesis means “beginning”. The first chapter tells us how the Lord created everything. It starts, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” This story is about the Lord creating the world around us, but, most importantly, it is a story about how the Lord creates and prepares us to become angels in heaven. This is why the story of the Lord creating the world is not the same as the descriptions in science books.</p> <p>Did you know that the Lord has created a heaven and earth in your mind? He also makes light shine there! The “heaven” in your mind is the part of you that can have the light of the Lord shining in it, and the “earth” is the part of you that lives in this world and sometimes doesn't think about the Lord or what is right and wrong.</p> <p>What happened on first day of creation? God created light and separated it from the darkness, making day and night.</p> <p>True ideas from the Lord's Word are the spiritual light shining in our minds. They can show us the way to heaven—just as physical light can show you the world around you so you can see where you are going.</p> <p>The Lord gives us light in the world so we can see all of the wonderful things He created. He also gives us heavenly light in His Word so that He can lead us to heaven and make us truly happy.</p>

3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Light and Darkness Experiment

In the beginning the earth was without form and void. Then God created light and divided the light from the darkness, creating day and night. The dawning light pictures a dawning awareness of what is right (light) when we are ignorant and thinking only about ourselves (darkness). Children will assemble a bottle filled with oil and colored water that can be shaken together but will always separate. This illustrates the way selfish thoughts always separate from the Lord’s true and loving ideas.



1. Give each child an empty water bottle and plastic cup. Fill cup with water. Add color to the water either by dipping a blue or black washable marker in and swirling it around, or adding washable blue or black powder paint. Pour the water into the bottle, filling it half way. *Hint:* use a plastic cup bent into a funnel to make this easier.
2. Fill the bottle up with oil.
3. What do the oil and water do? (They separate.)
4. Screw the cap on the bottle tightly! Duct tape the lid closed. Shake the bottle. Can the oil and water mix? (No.)
5. The oil (light color) is like the true ideas that come from the Lord in His Word. The (dark) water is our minds when we care and think only about ourselves. These things are so different it is impossible to mix them, no matter how hard we might try!

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Materials for Each Child

small recycled plastic bottle, water, washable blue or black marker or paint, oil (light vegetable oil e.g. corn oil or mineral oil (**heavy oils do not work well**)), duct tape, disposable plastic cup

Prepare in Advance

Remove all labels stuck to the bottles.

Avoid a Mess!

Secure the bottle cap using duct tape so it cannot be removed. Oil is hard to remove from carpets and upholstery.

Video

View at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-light-and-darkness-experiment/>

Choice

Let There Be Light

We all experience times of darkness—times when we are confused and do not understand something. When someone explains it to us and we begin to understand we may say, “Oh, *now* I see!”. Ignorance and confusion are forms of darkness in our minds. We “see” when our minds are lit up by the light of truth. We are going to make a beautiful “fan” of light that can shine out in the darkness, reminding us that the Lord is always near, wanting to shine the light of His truth in our minds.

1. Place *Darkness Template* (p. 7) over a piece of black or dark paper. Holding the two pieces of paper together, cut around the oval line. (If this is too difficult, have children cut out the template and trace it onto dark paper with a pencil and then cut out the dark oval.)
2. Fold the black oval in half from A to B as shown on template.

Materials for Each Child

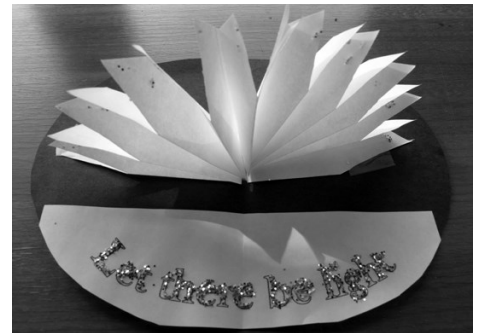
piece of black paper, *Darkness Template* p.7, *Light Fan Template* p. 8 printed on yellow or white paper, one text slip from p. 9, scissors, tape, *optional:* glue, glitter

Prepare in Advance

Copy *Light Fan Template* p. 8 onto yellow paper. Cut apart *Let There Be Light* text slips, p. 9. Create a sample to show the children.

Let There Be Light *continued*

3. Cut the *Light Fan Template* page (p. 8) in half lengthwise along the solid line.
4. Fold each half into a fan, back and forth in accordion style, using the guide lines to measure the width of the first two folds.
5. Tape the two fans together to create one long fan.
6. *Optional:* snip out triangles on one end of the fan to create a more ray-like effect as shown in the 2nd photo.
7. Tape the fan to the *Darkness Oval* as shown on the template.
8. *Optional:* decorate the text slip (p. 9) with glitter, colors, etc.
9. Glue text slip to *Darkness Oval* as shown.
10. Fold the oval in half to hide the light. Practice saying, “Let there be light” and opening the oval to let the light shine.



Choice

Coloring Page: The First Day

Hand out copies of *The First Day* (p.11) and invite the children to color it. *Optional:* use glue and glitter to make the light extra special.

Materials for Each Child *The First Day* p. 11; crayons, markers, or colored pencils; *optional:* glue and glitter to make the light look special

4. Wrap It Up

Memory Verse

Read the memory verse aloud. Invite the children to repeat it after you and then have them try to say it on their own.

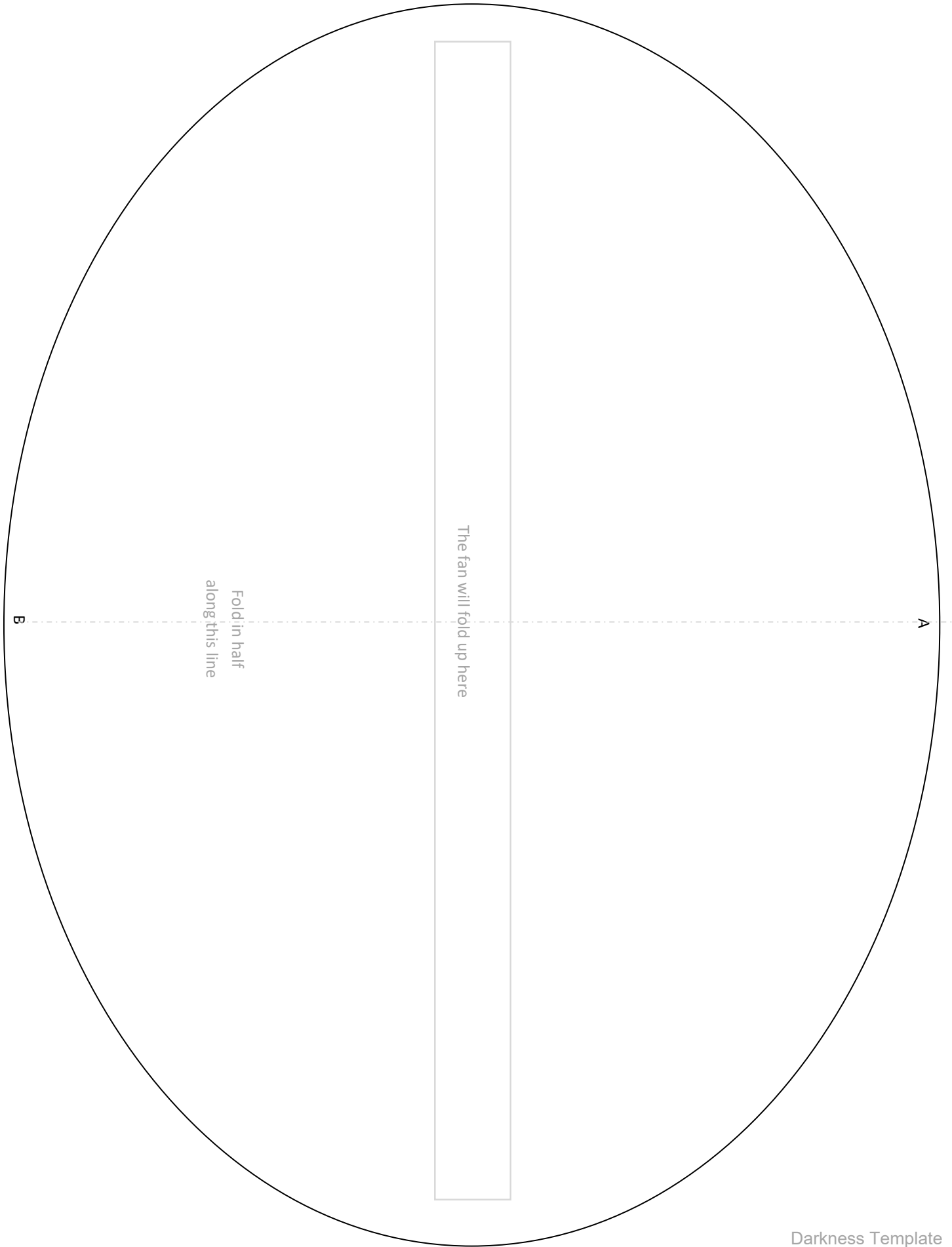
Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.
Genesis 1:3

Closing

The Word connects the world around us with heavenly ideas. We can think of this when we say, “I see”. When we “see” or we understand a new idea, we are experiencing the Lord’s light shining into our minds.

Where would you look in the Word to find the story of creation? (the beginning, Genesis)

Give *Parent Notes* (p. 12) to children as they leave.



The fan will fold up here

Fold in half
along this line

Darkness Template

Use these guidelines to make the first two fan folds

Use these guidelines to make the first two fan folds

Cut page in half along this line

Let there be light

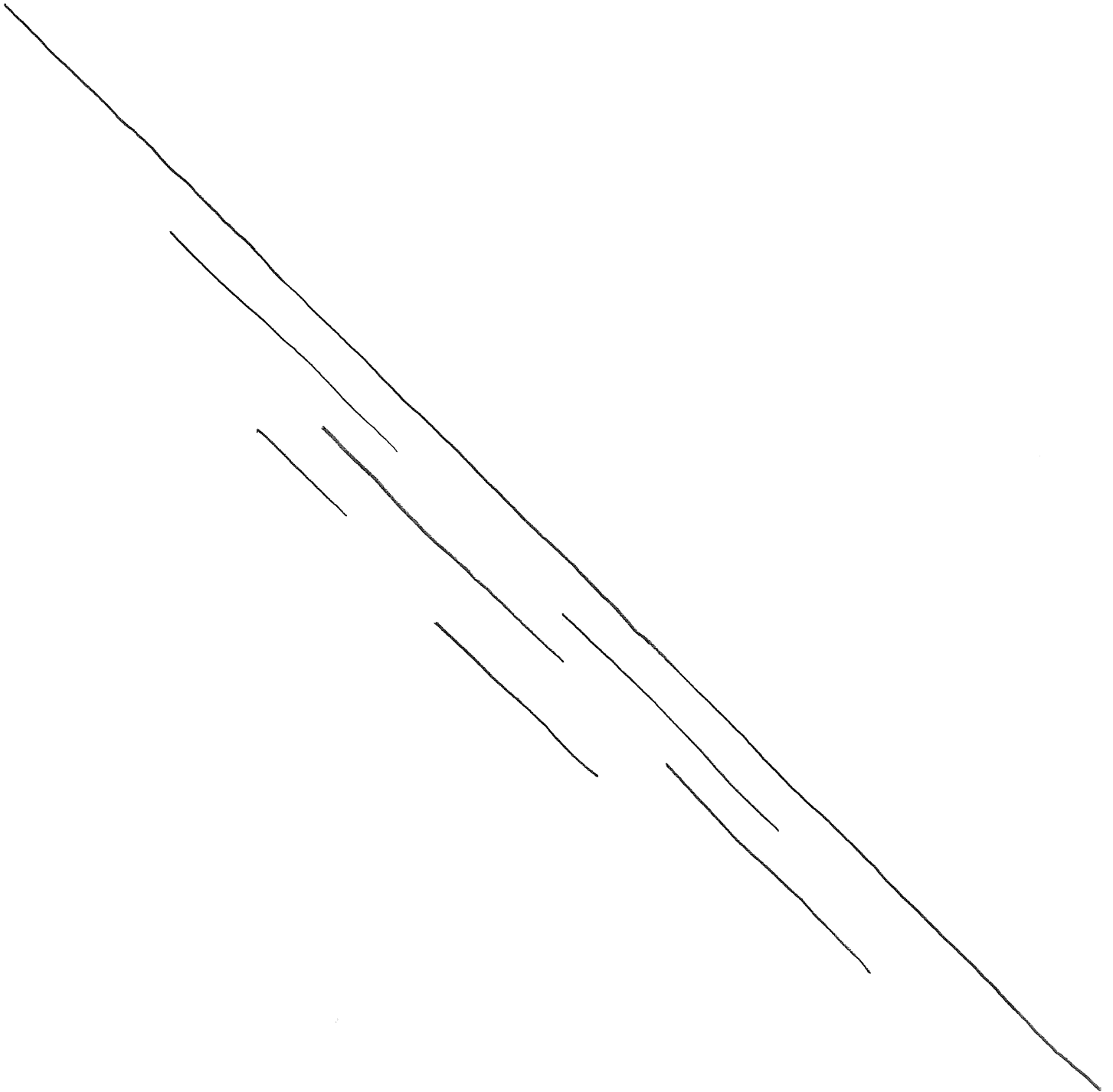
Let there be light

Let there be light

Let there be light

Let there be light





Parent Notes

Make a copy for each child. Hand out as children leave.

<p style="text-align: center;">PARENT NOTE</p> <p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>We are learning about the story of creation from the book of Genesis. Genesis means “beginning”—it is at the beginning of the Old Testament. Today we heard how the Lord created light. “Light” enters our minds when we “see” something new! Look for the light experiment video at https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-light-and-darkness-experiment/</p> <p>We encourage you to help your child learn this week’s Memory Verse. Try saying it once or twice in the morning, at mealtime or before bed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Memory Verse</p> <p>Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light (Genesis 1:3).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PARENT NOTE</p> <p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>We are learning about the story of creation from the book of Genesis. Genesis means “beginning”—it is at the beginning of the Old Testament. Today we heard how the Lord created light. “Light” enters our minds when we “see” something new! Look for the light experiment video at https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-light-and-darkness-experiment/</p> <p>We encourage you to help your child learn this week’s Memory Verse. Try saying it once or twice in the morning, at mealtime or before bed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Memory Verse</p> <p>Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light (Genesis 1:3).</p>
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