

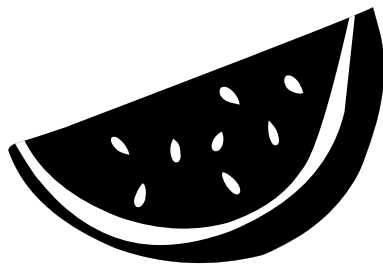
# Extravagant Love



LENT 2025

*JOURNAL*

CTKELC.ORG



THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LENT 2025

BEGINS WEDNESDAY MARCH 5 AND  
ENDS ON THURSDAY APRIL 17

5

**WEEK ONE**  
MARK 7:31-37  
WITH AN EMPHASIS ON VERSE 36

12

**WEEK TWO**  
1 KINGS 8:27-30

19

**WEEK THREE**  
PSALM 100

26

**WEEK FOUR**  
I CORINTHIANS 15.50-58

33

**WEEK FIVE**  
1 CORINTHIANS 3: 1-9

 Google Play



 Apple Store



← **NRSVUE FOR READINGS**  
AVAILABLE IN THE CTK APP →

# Dear Beloved Christ the King Community,

As we join together this Lenten season, I hope that you will take the time to pause and deepen your relationship with God.

This journal will provide a unique opportunity for you to reflect on scripture that is connected to parts of our congregation's history. How did we begin and where are we headed, both as individuals and as a community? How do we participate in God's mission in the world around us?

Our Lenten Theme this year is "Extravagant Love." God shows Extravagant Love to us. How do we embody and express Extravagant Love toward ourselves, our family and friends, and outward to those in our local and global communities.

I invite you to ponder, reflect, and listen deeply for what God is calling you to be and to do throughout this season of Lent. Use this journal as time set aside to both learn about our congregation, but beyond that, to discern what we are being called into in our next 80 years.

May we journey with Jesus this Lent toward the cross in reflection and repentance.

As we pause in gratitude for our history, may we be open to God's surprises for our future.

Grace and peace to you, and especially hope,

***Rev. Dr. Jennifer Hope-Tringali***  
Senior Pastor



# a Prayer of Extravagant Love

by CTK member and Seminarian Rachel McWhirter

O God of Love,  
Your Word shaped us from the start—  
abundant, boundless, overflowing—  
rooted in hearts, twenty-two strong,  
planted seeds that still are growing.

Your Spirit rings in bells that chime,  
calling us to sacred time—  
in waters deep, to table spread,  
in living words our souls are fed.

At the font, marked IC XC NIKA,  
Christ conquers death, our Alpha, Omega.  
Washed in grace, we rise anew,  
rooted, thriving, held by You.

From gathered hearts and voices singing in time,  
through sacred waters, bread, and wine,  
when we venture out from bath and table—  
Your love endures, strong and stable.

**Amen.**





# Week One

“So much more they  
published it” -  
Our Church’s Beginning

Mark 7:31-37

*“So much the more they published it” - Our Congregation’s Beginning:*

August 26, 1945 congregation was organized with 22 baptized members assembled for worship who then voted to organize the Lutheran Congregation, Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church. The charter membership opened with these words: “So much the more they published it.” (Mark 7:36). Having a great desire to assist with the extension of the Gospel of our blessed Lord and Saviour and King, Jesus Christ, and the furtherance of His Church, we humbly subscribe our names to this document for the purpose of organizing Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Southgate, Southampton, West University Place of Greater Houston, whose mission shall be the preaching of the Word of God and administration of the Holy Sacraments.” This important document was signed by sixteen adults and six baptized children and youth, with a total of twenty-two charter members to date.

*Mark 7:31-37 NRSVue with an emphasis on verse 36*

*Jesus Cures a Deaf Man*

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went by way of Sidon toward the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32 They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33 He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. 34 Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” 35 And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36 Then Jesus[a] ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37 They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

## Weekly Reflection Questions

How can we "publish" God's abundant love in our words, actions, and ministries today?

The word "Ephphatha" (Be opened) is powerful. In what ways do you need to be opened to experiencing God's love more fully?

In verse 36, Jesus commands them not to tell anyone, yet the more he tells them, the more zealously they proclaim it. Why do you think they couldn't keep quiet?



# REFLECTION



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THIS READING MAKES ME FEEL:



# RICE VILLAGE CAMPUS



# Path of Abundant Love

A Lenten Reflection Game at the Rice Village Campus



**Instructions:** Follow the journey (using the map or physically on-campus) through different symbolic locations inspired by the church. You can play from anywhere—at home, at church, or with a small group. Complete the reflection or activity at each stop. The goal is to reach Abundant Love!

## 1. Start: The Church Doors

Symbolizing entering into Lent with intention.

- Challenge: Write down one way you want to grow in love this season.
- Scripture: Joel 2:12-13 - "Return to me with all your heart."

## 2. Nave - Worship

Symbolizing deepening your relationship with God.

- Challenge: Spend one minute in silence or write a short prayer.
- Reflection: Where do you feel closest to God?

## 3. Fellowship Hall - Community

Symbolizing love for others.

- Challenge: Write or draw something kind for someone else today.
- Reflection: Who has shown you abundant love? How can you pass it on?

## 4. The Courtyard - Service

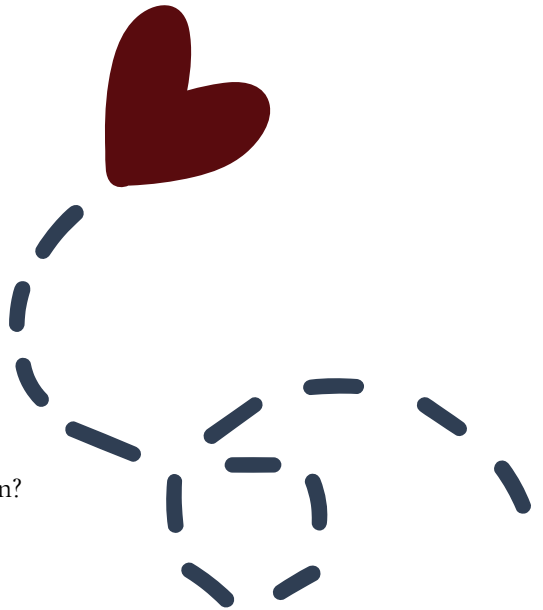
Symbolizing putting faith into action.

- Challenge: Do one small act of love for someone this week.
- Reflection: How does service help us experience abundant love?

## 5. Final Stop: The Bell Tower

Symbolizing making a joyful noise and God's resounding love.

- Challenge: When you hear the bells, draw a heart and inside of it, write what "abundant love" means to you.
- Scripture: John 13:34 - "Love one another as I have loved you."



**Bonus Reflection:** Look back at your journey. Which stop was most meaningful to you? How can you carry the spirit of Abundant Love beyond Lent?







Week Two

“Come Holy Spirit” -  
Our Church Bells

1 Kings 8: 27-30

## The Church Bells

The bells of our church serve as more than instruments of sound—they are voices of faith, calling us to prayer, worship, and reflection. **The largest bell, tuned to F#**, bears an inscription rooted in Danish Lutheran piety: “To the bath and to the table, to the prayers and to the word, I call every seeking soul.”

This bell tolls for funerals and throughout the penitential season of Lent, summoning us to solemn remembrance and hope. **The A bell** carries the invocation “Veni, Creator Spiritus, Mentis Tuorum Visita” (“Come Holy Spirit, our Souls Inspire”), a timeless plea for divine presence. **The C# bell** echoes the hymn *Built on a Rock* (ELW 652), inscribed with the words, “Through all the passing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are ringing, many may come to hear God’s word,” a reminder of the enduring call to gather in faith. **The E bell**, marked with the phrase *Christus Rex Venit in Pace* (“Christ the King Comes in Peace”), is struck seven times during the Our Father, reinforcing Christ’s reign of peace. Finally, **another F# bell** proclaims the words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: “Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men,” from his poem *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*, a hopeful declaration that even in the darkest times, the message of Christ’s peace prevails. Each bell carries a sacred voice, drawing us into the rhythms of worship, community, and divine presence.

### *1 Kings 8:27-30 NRSVue*

27 “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! 28 Regard your servant’s prayer and his plea, O Lord my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today, 29 that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, ‘My name shall be there,’ that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. 30 Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; hear and forgive.

## Weekly Reflection Questions

Which bell transcription speaks to you today and why?

If God's name dwells in a place, how does that change how we interact with that space and the people within it?

Solomon acknowledges that even the highest heavens cannot contain God. How does this shape your understanding of God's abundant love?

# REFLECTION



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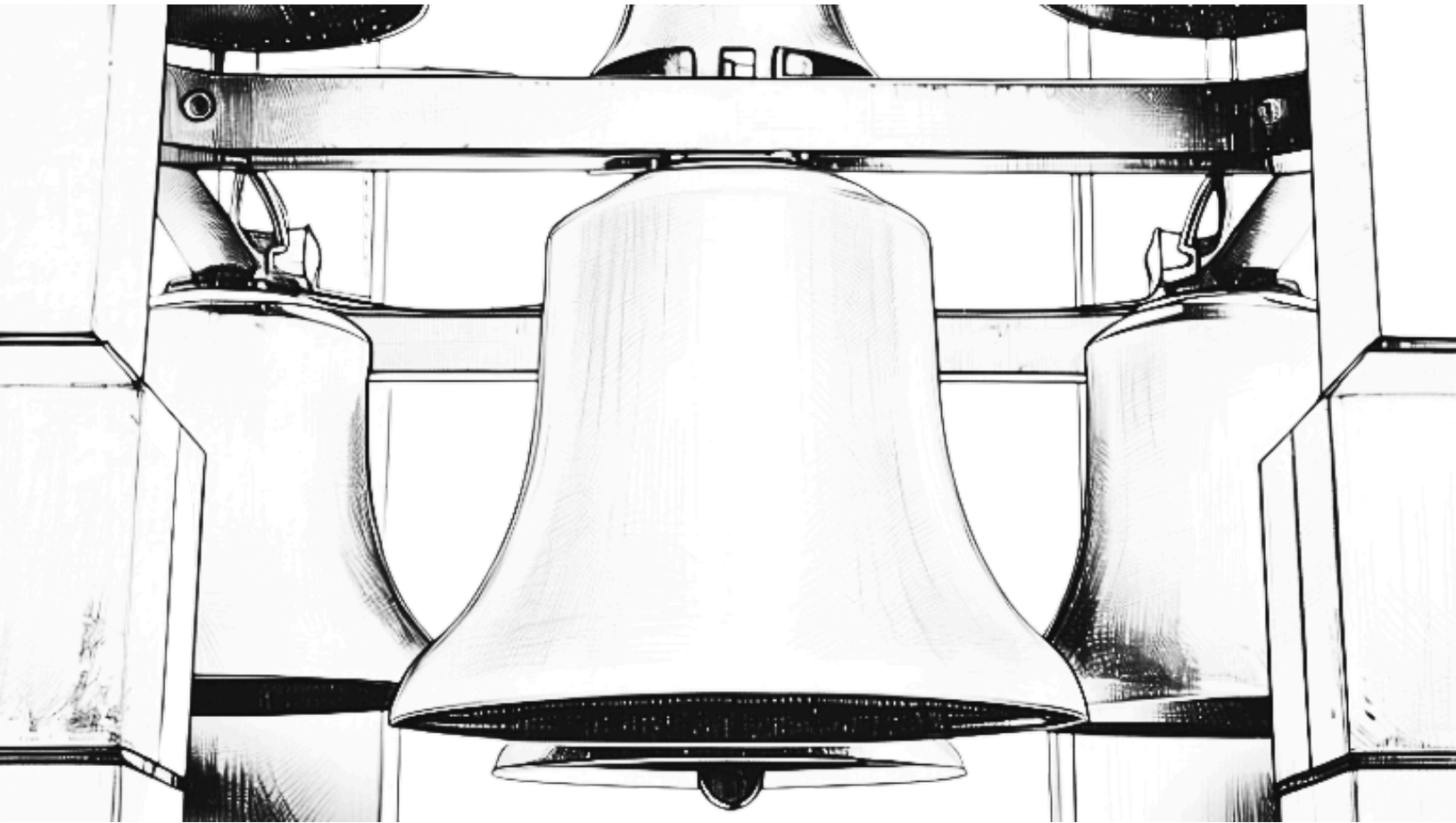
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TO THE BATH AND TO THE  
TABLE, TO THE PRAYERS



AND TO THE WORD, I CALL  
EVERY SEEKING SOUL

# Bells of Faith

## A Listening & Reflection Activity



### Step 1: Listen & Observe

Listen to our church bells (or Scan the QR Code)

When the church bells ring, pause and take a moment to listen. Consider these questions:

- What emotions or memories does the sound bring to mind?
- If the bells could speak, what message might they be sharing?
- How do the different tones and patterns of the bells impact the way you feel?

### Step 2: Match the Message

- Each bell in our church carries a unique inscription and purpose. Match the following inscriptions to their meanings by drawing a line to connect them.

#### **BELL INSCRIPTION**

"To the bath and to the table, to the prayers and to the word, I call every seeking soul."

"Veni, Creator Spiritus, Mentis Tuorum Visita"

"Through all the passing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are ringing, many may come to hear God's word."

"Christus Rex Venit in Pace"

"Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men"

#### **MEANING**

Calls us to worship, sacraments, and prayer

Invokes the Holy Spirit

Encourages people to gather for worship

Struck 7 times during the Our Father

Echoes the message of Christmas

### **Step 3: Create Your Own Bell Inscription**

Imagine that CTK is adding a new bell. What message would you inscribe on it? Write a short phrase, Bible verse, or whatever you think reflects our faith community.



Blank space for writing a bell inscription.







Week Three

“Make a Joyful Noise” -  
Our Bach Organ

Psalm 100

*Psalm 100 NRSVue*

*All Lands Summoned to Praise God*

*A Psalm of thanksgiving*

1 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Serve the Lord with gladness;  
come into his presence with singing.

3 Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;[a]

we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him; bless his name.

5 For the Lord is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever  
and his faithfulness to all generations.

*Psalm 100*

*Robert Alter translation:*

Shout out to the Lord, all the earth,  
worship the Lord in rejoicing,  
come before Him in glad song.

Know that the LORD is God.

He has made us, and we are His,  
His people and the flock He tends.

Come into His gates in thanksgiving,  
His courts in praise.

Acclaim Him,

Bless His name.

For the LORD is good  
forever His kindness  
and for all generations His faithfulness.

## Weekly Reflection Questions

What does it mean to you that God's faithfulness extends to all generations? How does this shape the way you think about your faith community?

In what ways do you "acclaim" God in your personal life? How can you incorporate more intentional blessings and praise into your daily routine?

Which translation of the Psalm resonates more with your experience of worship and gratitude? Why?

# REFLECTION



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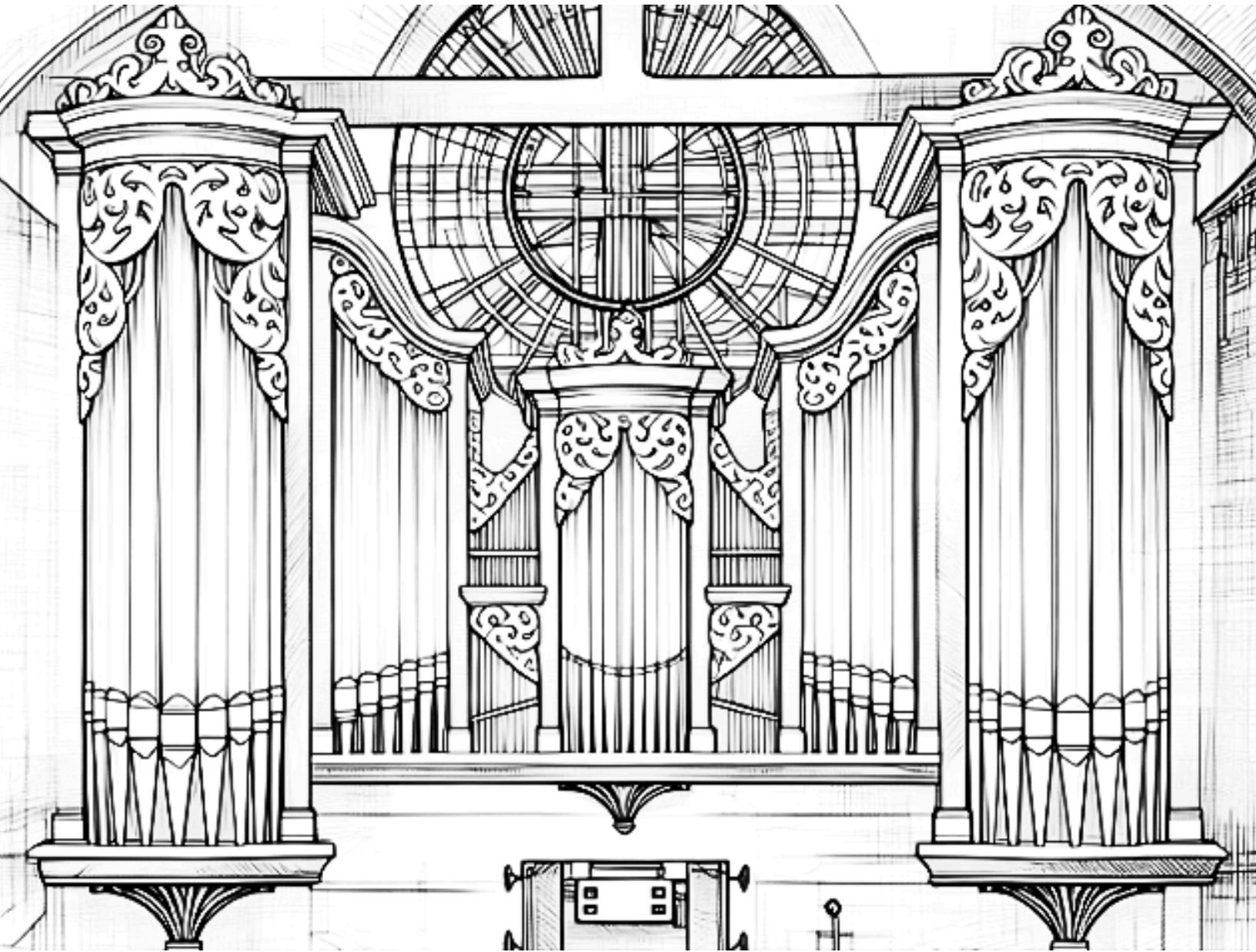
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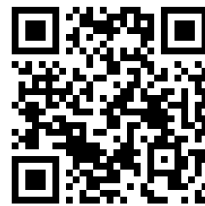
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OPUS 128



## Sacred Lines: Continuous Drawing with the Organ"



- **Scan the QR Code** to listen to selections of music from the CTK Organ.
- **Set Your Intention** – Take a deep breath and let go of expectations. This is not about creating a perfect image but about responding to the music.
- **Start with a Single Line** – Place your pen on the paper and begin drawing without lifting it. Let your hand move freely, flowing with the rhythms, tones, and emotions of the organ.
- **Feel the Music** – Allow the rise and fall of the notes to guide your line—soft, sweeping curves for gentle melodies, jagged or bold strokes for dramatic moments.
- **Embrace the Imperfection** – There's no right or wrong way. Your drawing is a visual echo of the music's movement and your response to it.
- **Reflect** – Once the music stops, take a moment to observe your drawing. What shapes, emotions, or patterns emerge? Consider journaling a few words about your experience.

This practice invites you to engage both heart and hand in a form of embodied prayer, seeing sound come to life through line.





Week Four

“Jesus Christ Conquers  
Sin and Death” -  
Our Font

I Corinthians 15:50-58

*I Corinthians 15.50-58 NRSVue*

50 What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Look, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die,<sup>[a]</sup> but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When this perishable body puts on imperishability and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

55 “Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

## Weekly Reflection Questions

Verse 54 declares, "Death has been swallowed up in victory." How does God's love give you confidence in the face of life's uncertainties?

What does it mean to you that we will all be changed "in the twinkling of an eye" (v.52)? How does this promise bring hope?

When have you felt like your labor in the Lord was in vain? How does this passage challenge that feeling?

# REFLECTION



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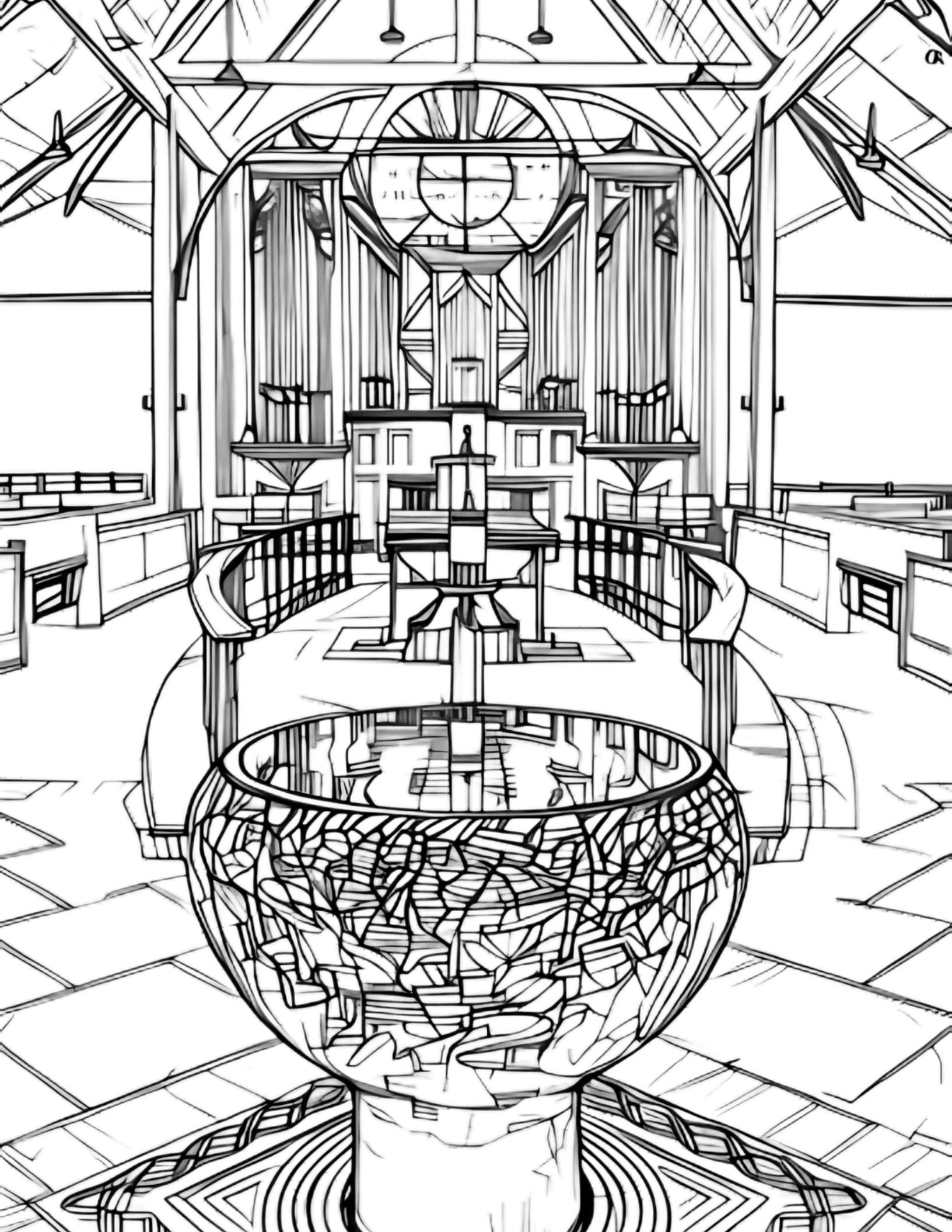
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# Living Waters

## A Baptismal Font Reflection Activity



### Step 1: Observe & Reflect

Gather around the baptismal font and take a moment to observe its details:

- What materials and symbols do you notice?
- How does the water move or reflect light?
- What feelings or memories come to mind as you stand here?

Discuss: What does baptism mean to you? How has the symbol of water played a role in your faith?

### Step 2: Baptismal Symbol Match

The baptismal font represents key themes in Christian life. Draw a line to match each symbol with its meaning:

#### **SYMBOL**

-  Water
-  Candle
-  Dove
-  Shell
-  Living Water



#### **MEANING**

- Christ as the light of the world
- God's ongoing grace and renewal
- Traditional symbol of baptism and the act of pouring water
- Cleansing, new life, and renewal
- The Holy Spirit's presence and peace

### Step 3: Blessing the Waters

Imagine you are writing a short prayer or blessing for the water in the font. Use this space to write a prayer that could be used in a baptism:









Week Five

“God’s Field” -  
Our Memorial Campus

I Corinthians 3:1-9

*1 Corinthians 3: 1-9 NRSVue*

*On Divisions in the Corinthian Church*

3 And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people but rather as fleshly, as infants in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, 3 for you are still fleshly. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling[a] among you, are you not fleshly and behaving according to human inclinations? 4 For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not all too human? 5 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and each will receive wages according to their own labor. 9 For we are God’s coworkers, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

## Weekly Reflection Questions

Verse 9 says, “We are God’s coworkers.” How does this change the way we see our work in the church and in the world?

How do you see yourself in this passage—are there areas where you feel spiritually mature, and areas where you still feel like an infant in Christ?

What would it look like to embrace God’s abundant love as a way to heal division within faith communities?

# REFLECTION



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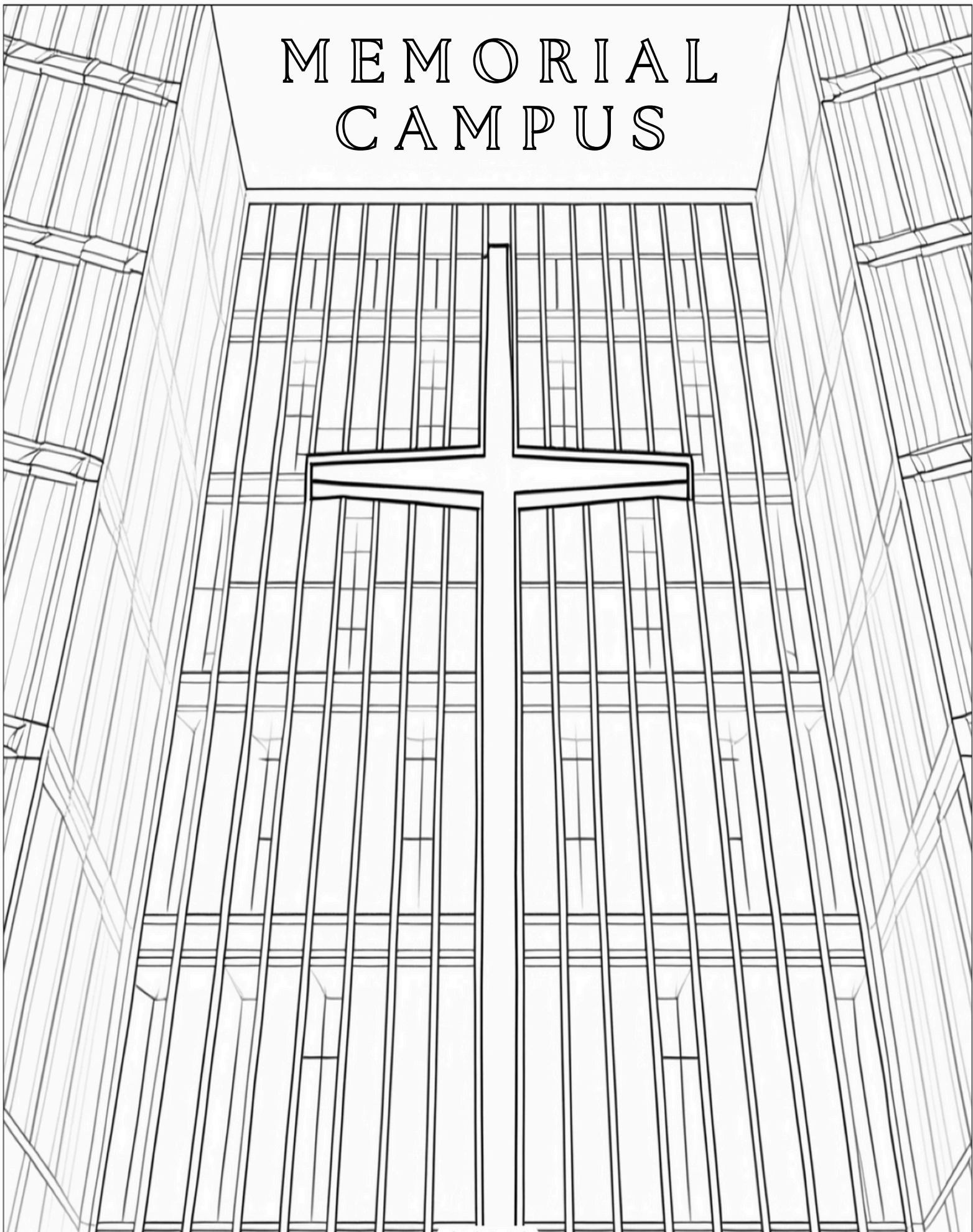
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# MEMORIAL CAMPUS



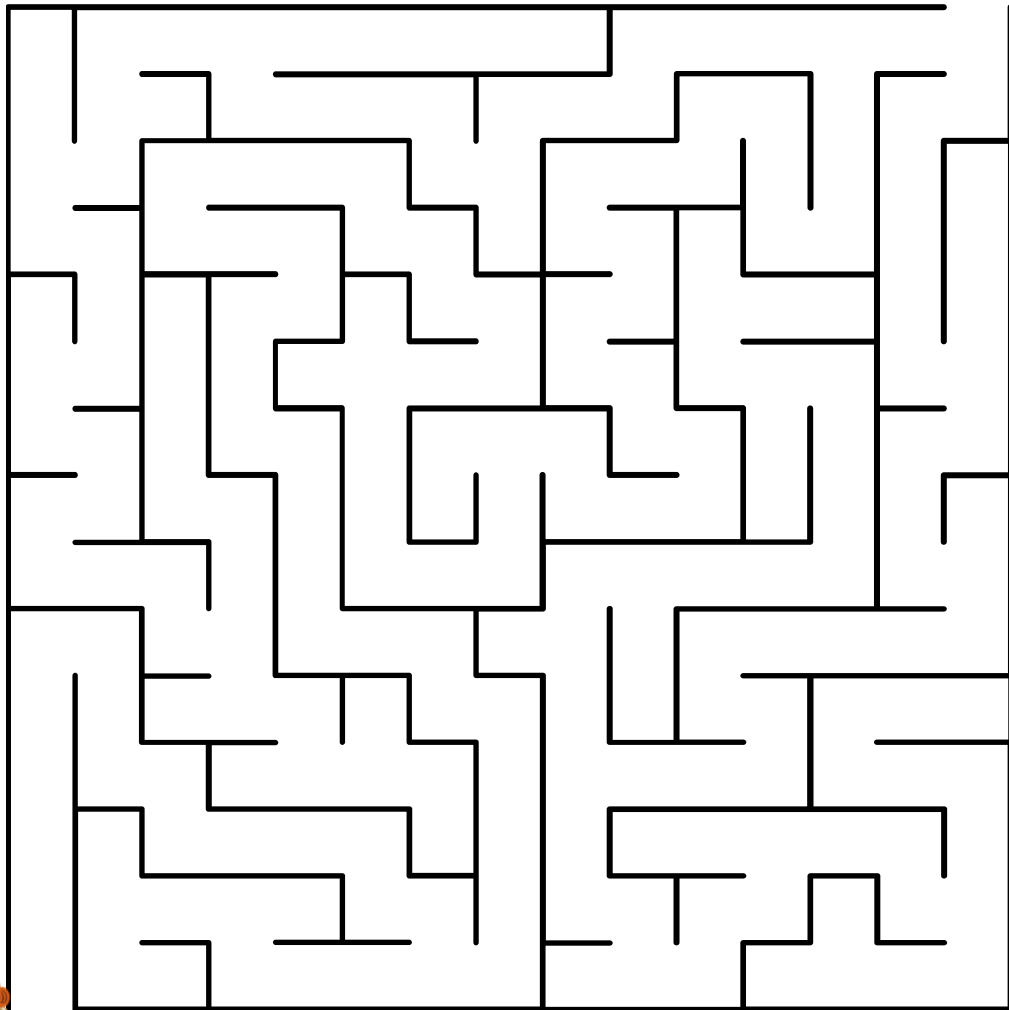
# Dinner Church

## Maze Challenge



Can you help the new members join the rest of the CTK crew for dinner church at Memorial Campus?

*Set a Timer! You have 3 minutes to find the correct path!*



You can join us for Dinner Church on 1st Wednesdays of the month at 6pm in the Memorial Campus Fellowship Hall. April 2 we will meet at MAM. Scan the QR Code to learn more!









# LENTEN REFLECTION




What was your favorite part of the Lent journal? Would you add anything?


How did you feel about worship?

What are your thoughts on the 2025 Lent programming?

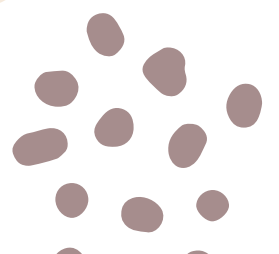
What could be added or improved this year?



Anything else you'd like to share?



Please feel free to give your responses to someone on staff so we can improve our future in-house materials!



note + doodle space



[CTKELC.ORG/GIVE](http://CTKELC.ORG/GIVE)

