

Watering Flowers: A Kindness Activity for the Growing Time

You will need:

- ☐ flower template
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ card stock in bright colors (including green)
- ☐ glue sticks
- ☐ markers



In his letters, Paul talks about the fruits of the Spirit. These are qualities or ways of being that show that the Spirit is active in us, just as juicy fruit shows that a tree is alive and healthy. One of the fruits of the Spirit is *kindness*. When we are kind, we treat people with gentleness and understanding. Kindness helps people grow, the way water and sunshine help plants grow. Try using kind words to create this paper flower garden and see what else grows!

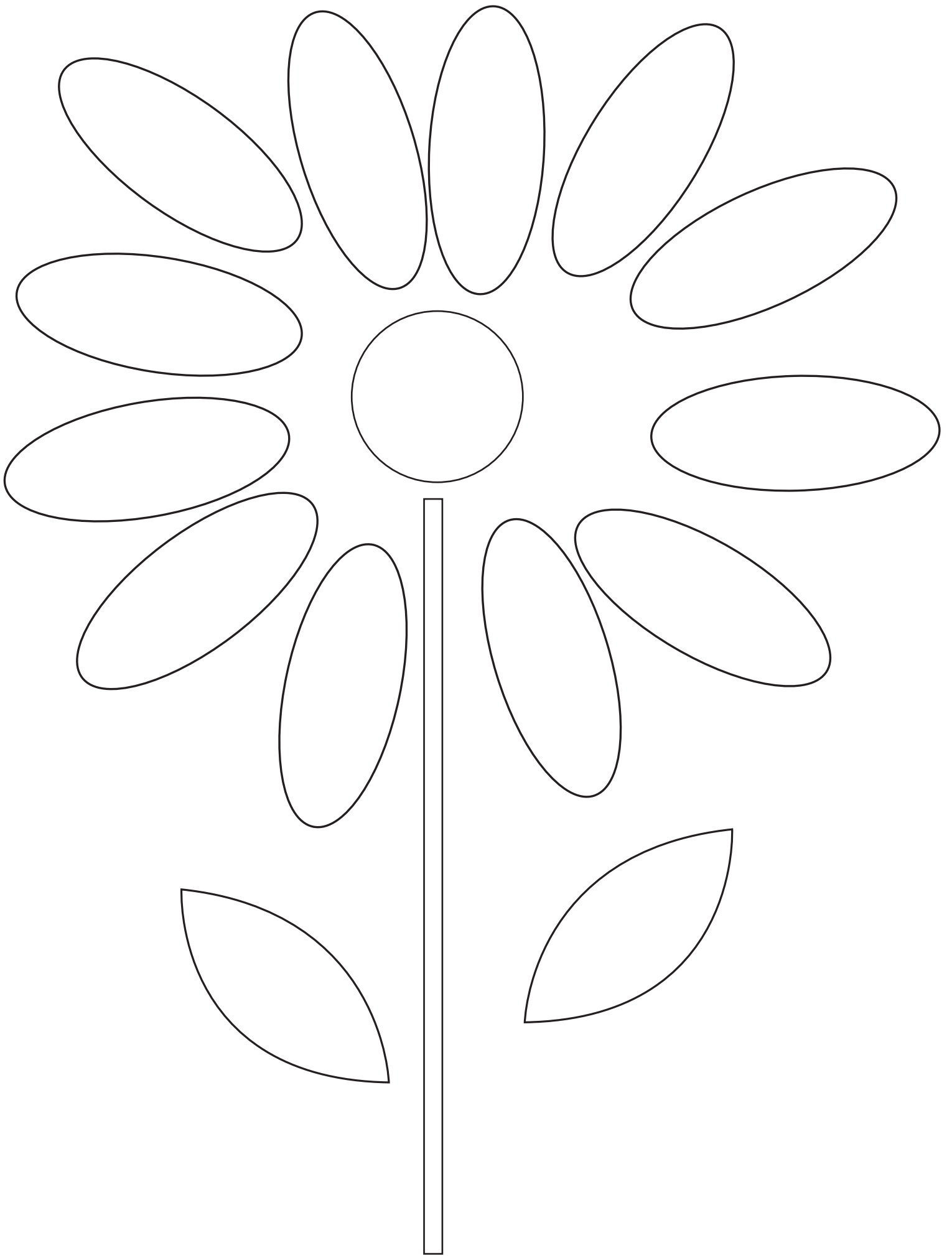
This is how you do it with a group of people:

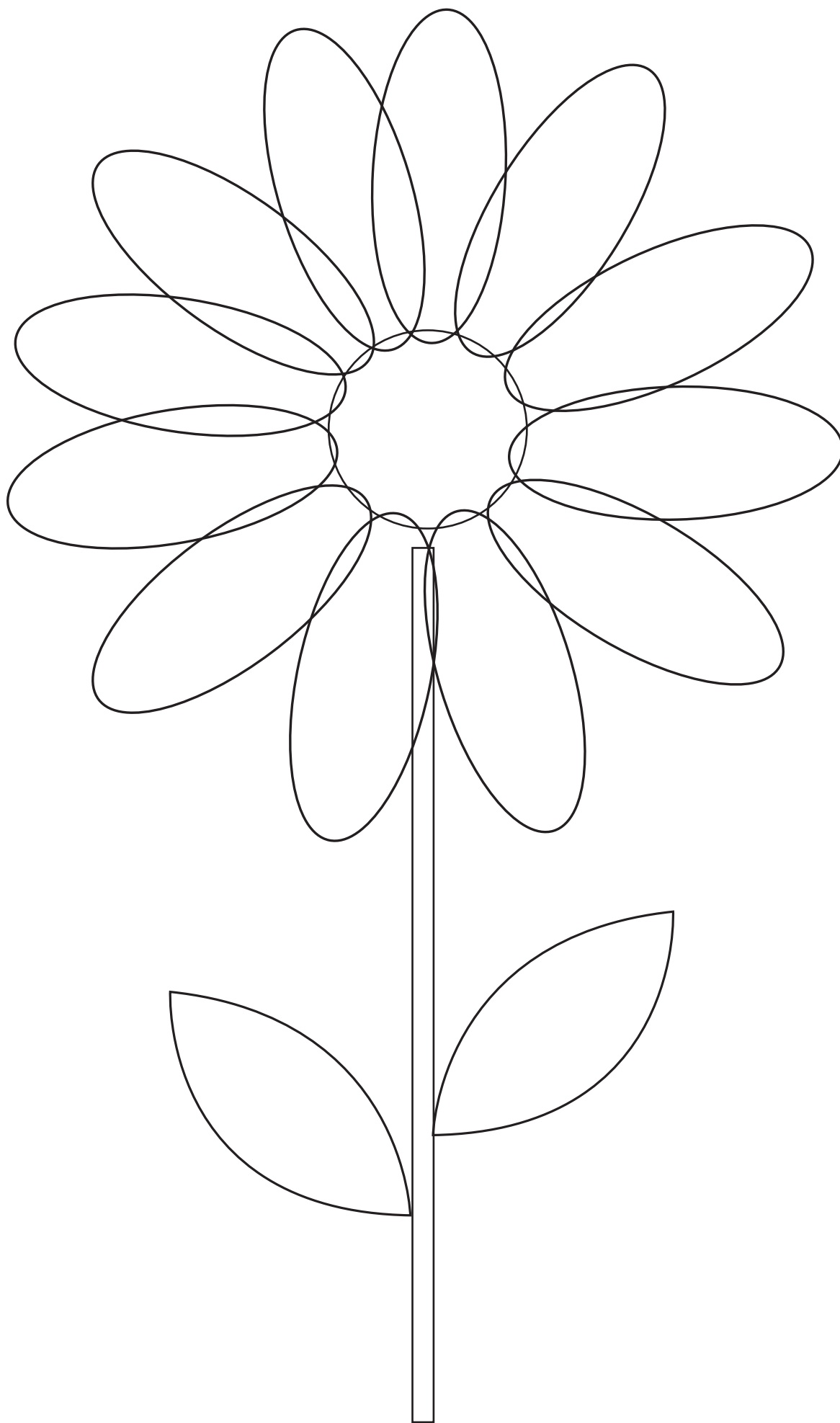
- ☐ Print out the flower template and cut out the pieces.
- ☐ Use the template to trace flower petals and centres on cardstock. You will need one centre (circle) for each person in the group, and enough petals so that each person has one petal for every other person.
- ☐ Give each person a circle. This will be the centre of their flower. They can write their own names on the centre and decorate it.
- ☐ Think about someone in the group. What is something you like or admire about that person? It could be a quality, like their sense of humor, or honesty. Maybe it is something that person has done for you. On one of the petals, write a message describing what is so special about that person.
- ☐ Do the same for every other person in the group.
- ☐ When everyone is finished, share the petals (kind of like handing out Valentines) so that every group member has a “flower” full of petals made up of kind messages from everyone else.
- ☐ Add some stems and leaves and glue the flowers together.
- ☐ Notice how it feels to hear or read good things said about you. Notice how other people respond to hearing good things said about them. Kindness really does make a difference!



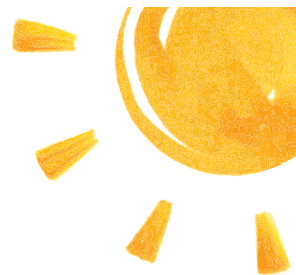
Adapted from *Planting Seeds: Practicing Mindfulness With Children* by Thich Nhat Hahn and the Plum Blossom Community (Parallax Press, 2007)







Fruits of the Spirit Prayer Beads



You will need:

- ☐ polymer clay (e.g. Fimo or Sculpey) in different colours
- ☐ bamboo skewers
- ☐ an oven, oven mitts, and a baking sheet
- ☐ waxed paper or some kind of cutting board
- ☐ hemp string, yarn, or leather cord

In *Breathe* we hear Paul talk about how you know when the Spirit is at work:

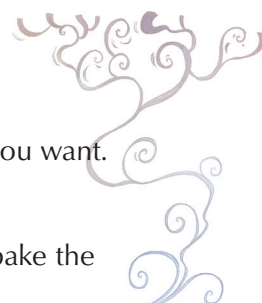


*Picture a tree.
Its roots drink water from the ground.
Sunlight falls on its leaves.
The wind carries pollen from blossom to blossom.
Soon the branches are heavy with sweet fruit.
Then you know the tree is full of life.*

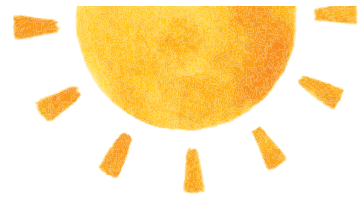
*It is the same with you. When the Spirit is in you,
you can see the good things that grow:
Kindness. Patience. Gentleness. Goodness.
Faithfulness. Self-Control. Peace. Joy. Love.
These are the fruits of the Spirit.*

You can make your own Fruits of the Spirit prayer beads to help you think more deeply about the ways you can share the fruits of the Spirit.

- ☐ Start by reading Galatians 5:22-23 or the section of *Breathe* printed above.
- ☐ Think about each “fruit” Paul names. What does each word mean? How would you describe each fruit in your own words? What does each fruit look like when someone shows it? Where have you seen it?
- ☐ Which “fruit” do you have most of? Which one is hardest for you to grow?
- ☐ Try to picture each fruit. What color is it? What shape?
- ☐ Use clay to make a different bead for each of the fruits of the Spirit. They can look any way you want. There is no “right” way to make them.
- ☐ Use a skewer to poke a hole through the centre of each bead. With the help of a grownup, bake the clay beads in the oven.
- ☐ When the beads are hard and have cooled, string them on a cord. Now you have your own personal set of Fruits of the Spirit prayer beads!

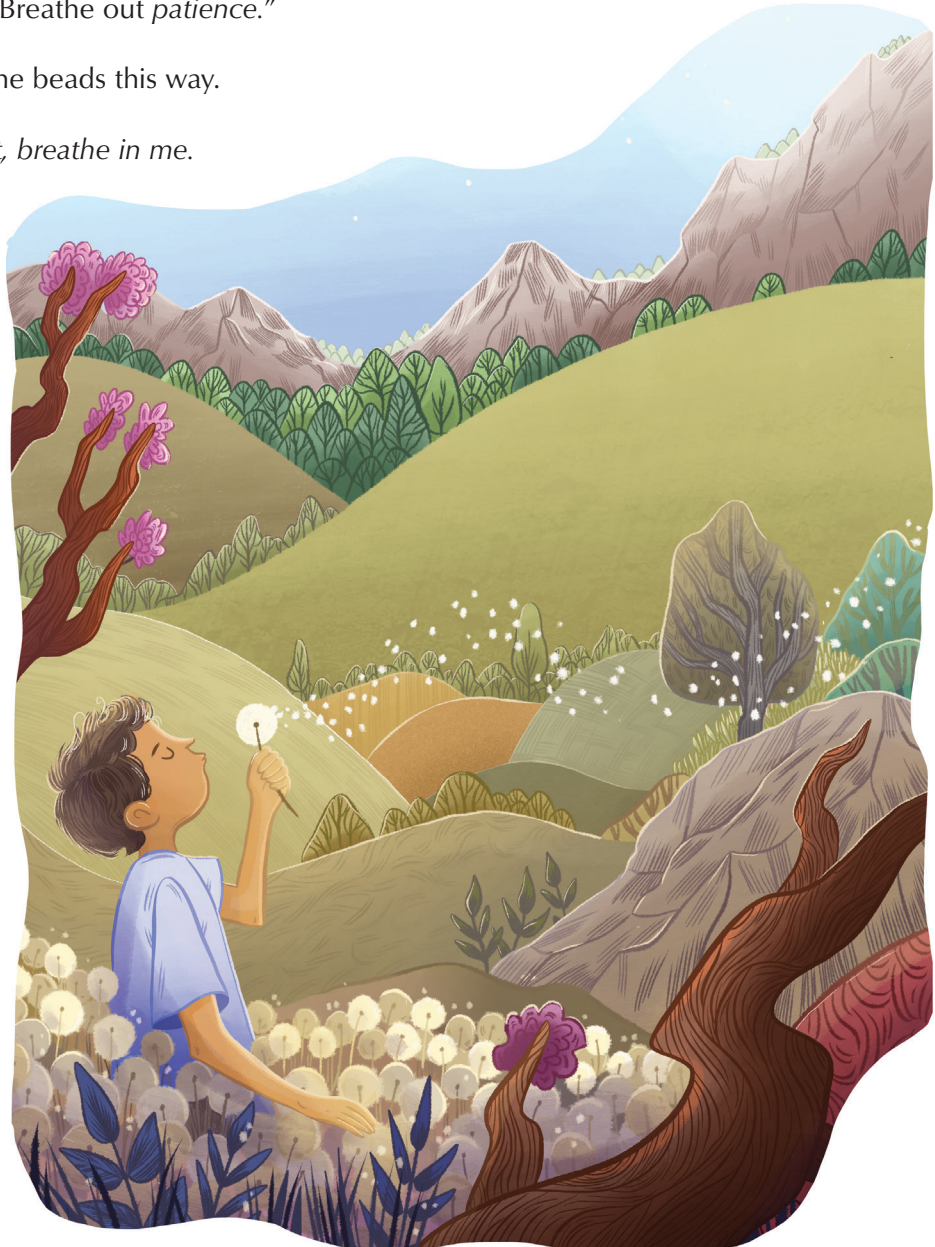


Praying With Your Beads



There are many ways to use your beads. Here is one idea:

- ☐ Find a quiet and comfortable place to sit.
- ☐ Hold the first bead between your thumb and forefinger.
- ☐ Think about why you made the bead the way you did. Why did you choose this color? Why did you make it this shape? What do you think is important about this particular “fruit” or quality?
- ☐ Take a few breaths. Every time you breathe in, imagine you are breathing in more of that quality—making it part of you. Every time you breathe out, imagine you are sending it out into the world.
- ☐ It might help to say the words quietly: “Breathe in *kindness*. Breathe out *kindness*.”
- ☐ After you have taken a few breaths, move on to the next bead and repeat the same steps. “Breathe in *patience*. Breathe out *patience*.”
- ☐ Go through each of the beads this way.
- ☐ Finish by saying, *Spirit, breathe in me*.



Who Has Seen the Wind? Making Pinwheels

You will need:

- ☐ pinwheel template
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ cardstock
- ☐ markers or crayons or watercolor paints
- ☐ a pencil with an eraser
- ☐ a few plastic Perler beads (optional)
- ☐ straight pins or thumb tacks



*We celebrate the gift of the Spirit with a cake and candles,
streamers and pinwheels.*

*The wind catches them and sets them spinning.
It breathes into the banners over our heads
and makes them dance.*

*I can't see the wind, but I know when it is near.
It makes things move.*

No one can see the wind—but we can see what it does! Just as we can see what the Spirit does all around us! One fun way of seeing the wind in action is to make a pinwheel. You could blow on it and use your breath to make it turn. Or you could put it in your garden or in a pot full of gravel and set it outside to let it catch the wind.

- ☐ Print out the pinwheel template and trace it onto your cardstock.
- ☐ Cut out the square, then cut carefully on the diagonal lines starting from each corner. Stop before you reach the centre!
- ☐ Decorate both sides of the pinwheel with markers, crayons, paints.
- ☐ Take one point on each of the four segments and gently curve it inward so the points meet in the middle. Every other corner will be bent inward.
- ☐ Poke a straight pin or a thumb tack through one layer at a time and then through the dot at the centre of the pinwheel (get a grownup to help you).
- ☐ Put a bead on the back of the pinwheel (where the pin is sticking out).
- ☐ Stick the sharp end of the pin or tack into the side of the pencil eraser. The bead will act as a spacer and make it easier for the pinwheel to turn, though you can still make a pinwheel if you don't have a bead.

Now you can go outside and see the wind for yourself—or at least know when it is there!



Easy Pinwheel Pattern

