

EMS FOCUS 2009–2012

# SHARING OUR HOPE

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH THE EYES OF ANOTHER

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# ems

WORKBOOK  
FOR CHILDREN



EMS FOCUS 2009–2012

# GIVING ACCOUNT OF OUR HOPE

## READING THE BIBLE THROUGH THE EYES OF ANOTHER

### The Children's Project

Children in Africa, America, Asia and Europe reflect on the same biblical stories and engage with them in creative ways. The results of this are then shared. This is the idea that lies behind the project.

The "Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany/Evangelischen Missionswerk in Südwestdeutschland" (EMS) invites you, in children's worship, Sunday School, religious education, children's groups or at home, to engage with the following Bible texts:

- ✎ **CREATED TO LIVE TOGETHER** (Creation, Genesis 1-2)
- ✎ **SET FREE BY GOD** (The flight from Egypt, Exodus 15)
- ✎ **WALKING WITH EACH OTHER ON THE WAY** (Ruth 1)
- ✎ **RULES FOR LIVING TOGETHER** (Sermon on the Mount, Mt 5-7)
- ✎ **BECOMING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR** (The Good Samaritan, Lk 10)
- ✎ **OVERCOMING HOPELESSNESS** (The disciples on the road to Emmaus, Lk 24)
- ✎ **TO HOPE FOR GOD'S NEW WORLD** (The New Jerusalem, Rev 21-22)

Children start from the same basis with the help of engaging art materials. Additional ideas to stimulate creativity turn the work with the text into an adventure!



Association of Churches and Missions  
in South Western Germany

The project is linked to the children's campaign **WORLDWIDE SURPRISE** ([www.worldwide-surprise.org](http://www.worldwide-surprise.org)), **German Bible Society** ([www.dbg.de](http://www.dbg.de)) and **Scripture Union International** ([www.bibellesebund.de](http://www.bibellesebund.de)).





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# READING THE BIBLE THROUGH THE EYES OF ANOTHER

## What is meant by this?

All over the world, the Bible is for Christians the basis of their faith. That is why children already get to know the Bible early on: in children's worship services, Sunday School, in religious education, or at home. How, then, do children in Africa, Asia, America and Europe understand the stories of the Bible? This often depends on where and how they live. The way children imagine biblical characters can also be very varied. To discover this – how a Bible story or a biblical word can be perceived in different ways – is the task of 'Reading the Bible with the Eyes of Another'. There is an activity for adults and for children.

## Telling about our hope

All over the world Christians live together with others. They experience that people's conditions of life, their cultures and their faiths often differ very much. The fellowship of the Association of Churches and Missions in South West Germany (EMS) would like to respond to this diversity by sharing the Gospel and by encountering others respectfully. Therefore, the EMS Focus "Giving account of our hope – Christian witness in a pluralistic world" offers opportunities of connecting people in different churches and cultures on a common journey of hope ([www.ems-online.org](http://www.ems-online.org)). The Bible Reading Project is part of this programme, inviting groups to share biblical stories of hope and to tell others about it.

## Who is behind the Project?

Churches and mission societies from countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe, affiliated in the EMS, have joined hands to participate in the Bible Project. This bridge between people serves our encounter with each other, our common prayer, and our learning from each other. The campaign WORLDWIDE SURPRISE is also supported by these churches. The materials come from the book Make-Your-Own Children's Bible by Michael Landgraf. These can be found in many languages. The German Bible Society and the publishing house Calwer-Verlag have kindly made these materials available.

## What can you do?

In the project, the first thing is to reflect on a biblical passage yourself. It is best to lead a discussion on it – in Sunday School, children's worship, children's group, or during religious education. Then you illustrate what the text brings in mind – how you 'see' the story. Ideas for different ways of Illustration you find on page 19. In a further step, you can find out what others in the world thought of the text and how they formed their ideas about it. Findings shall be collected and made available for participants in other churches and countries.

We are anxious to receive your results!

*With kind regards  
Bernhard Dinkelaker, General Secretary, EMS  
Michael Landgraf, Project Leader, Children's Bible Project*

**T**he following advice provides further help for you or your group. It offers brief information on the text: where does the main focus of the story lie? What can we discover? Then ideas are given to stimulate thought, discussion, working with the children's Bible pages and creative engagement with the story. On page 19 you can find further creative ideas for working with the children's Bible pages.

## CREATED TO LIVE TOGETHER

### **Creation, Genesis 1-2**

The first story of the Bible responds to the basic questions of all people: where does all that is around us come from? And for what purpose are we here for? The Bible says that God created the world. He made people as 'man and woman', and so that we are similar to him. Through this story we can discover: we are from the beginning made to live together, even if we differ. God also does not want to be separated from us, since he made us as his counterpart. The fact that we are created to live together brings hope. Everything that appears foreign to us, whether people or sometimes even God, is near to us through this common beginning.

### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ What causes me to wonder when I look at the world?*
- ✎ The Bible says that God is like a shepherd, a father, a mother ...  
Further images for God are ...*
- ✎ What do I see as the task of human beings ...?*

### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*How can you illustrate the whole of creation and living together in a picture?*

### **Being creative:**

*Try to present the days of creation and the day of rest with sounds and melodies. You can produce this yourself: with your voice, instruments, and with anything that makes a sound. When possible, make a recording of the composition.*

*Further ideas on "Creation" can be found on page 16 (WORLDWIDE SURPRISE).*

## SET FREE BY GOD

### **The Flight from Egypt, Exodus 15**

The story of Moses and Miriam recounts the deliverance of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. This story responds to the question: who sets us free when we are being oppressed? God liberates us from hardship. He gives hope to all those who suffer oppression. The Bible takes a whole chapter to describe the joy of people as they thank God for liberation.

#### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ I feel badly treated by others when ...*
- ✎ Situations in which people are oppressed by others are ...*
- ✎ How does it feel when you are freed from something?*

#### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*Depict the scene in which Miriam dances with the Israelites.  
If you like you can paste in a song ("When Israel was in Egypt's Land,  
Let my people go").*

#### **Being creative:**

*Look for a song that expresses joy. How can you express joy through dancing?  
Try it out together. When possible, take a photo or make a drawing of your activity.*

## WALKING WITH EACH OTHER ON THE WAY

### **Ruth 1 and 4**

The Israelites do not speak well of the women in Moab. Nevertheless, Ruth does not allow the poor Israeli widow to be alone. Ruth stays with her, moves with her to Israel and even adopts her faith. Later she marries and continues to look after her mother-in-law. Through this story we can discover: prejudices can be overcome. This foreigner even becomes the grandmother of David, the great king, whom the Jews still remember today. And out of this family lineage came Jesus.

#### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ To live somewhere as a foreigner means ...*
- ✎ To start out on the way with someone, that means ...*
- ✎ Finish the sentence: Community means ...*

#### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*Ruth continues to walk with Naomi along the way.  
Depict both women travelling on their way.*

#### **Being creative:**

*Ruth did not abandon Naomi on her journey through life.  
Depict your own life's journey using natural materials.  
Think about how to portray the good and the bad times.  
Place figures also on the way. They should represent people  
who were there for you and accompanied you.*

## RULES FOR LIVING TOGETHER

### **Sermon on the Mount, Mt 6**

The Sermon on the Mount gathers many of Jesus' thoughts. His words, given here, show how one should act towards others. Yet, is it easy to love your enemy? Is it easy to discover your own faults? How quickly do we judge others? 'Do to others as you would have them do to you': this phrase is called the 'Golden Rule of Jesus'. Through this story one can discover: if I do not want to be considered as an enemy or to be judged as one, then I must pay attention to my own conduct.

#### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ The last time I felt wrongly judged ...*
- ✎ Discuss what speaks for and against approaching one's enemy.*
- ✎ Practical examples of how the "Golden Rule" can be put into action are ...*

#### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*Depict Jesus the way you imagine him. You can make a frame around the proverb that fits with the thought of Jesus.*

#### **Being creative:**

*Jesus gives us rules here in order for us to live well together on the way. Arrange a blackboard that illustrates this and other rules for living a good life together.*

## BECOMING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

### **The Good Samaritan, Lk 10**

Who is actually my neighbour? My family members? One of my own people? That is not necessarily so says Jesus in the parable. Of all people it is a foreigner, one of the despised Samaritans, who cares for the person badly injured. Through the parable you can discover: one is not automatically a good neighbour. Anyone, a foreigner or even an enemy, can become my good neighbour.

#### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ I have also been helped by a foreigner ...*
- ✎ A foreigner like a Samaritan – that would be for us ...*
- ✎ Situations in which you can be a good neighbour to the other are ...*

#### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*Depict the scene in the parable that is most important for you. Perhaps you can find some cloth to use as clothes for the Samaritan.*

#### **Being creative:**

*Come together in groups of around six to eight people. Decide which scene is most important. Now stage the scene as if a photograph was going to be taken of you. (You will need people, animals or a background). Don't forget to photograph the scene.*

## OVERCOMING HOPELESSNESS

### **The disciples on the road to Emmaus, Lk 24**

After the death of Jesus, the disciples are downhearted. However, suddenly, the Risen Jesus meets two of them. This makes the way to Emmaus very special: the difficult journey now becomes a way of hope. The story shows also that even the disciples had difficulties in recognising Jesus straight away. Like the disciples we too are meant to recognise that God can defeat death and has overcome hopelessness!

#### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ I felt without hope, ...*
- ✎ When a person is without hope the world appears like ...*
- ✎ When you have hope, then you live ...*

#### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*You can illustrate the picture with colours.*

*What colour expresses hopelessness and what colour goes with hope?*

#### **Being creative:**

*Make a 'Tree of Hope': depict or construct a tree – on a placard/poster/banner, out of cardboard, or from a big branch of a tree. Cut out fruits from paper (Tip: you can copy the fruit onto different colours of paper to have a variety of colourful fruits). On these fruits you can write whatever comes to mind when you think of a life full of hope ("What are the fruits of hope?"). You can also make the roots of the tree. What is the foundation of a life full of hope ("What are the roots of hope?").*

## TO HOPE FOR GOD'S NEW WORLD

### **The New Jerusalem, Rev 21-22**

John receives a vision of the future from God. In the Book of Revelation he speaks about this. Terrible images cross before his eyes. However, in the end, full of hope he looks towards God's new world. So we can discover what we should hope for. The future, which God has ready for us, will be free from pain, injustice and foreignness. With this a circle is completed: at the end there will be again a shared life between God and people.

#### **For reflection and discussion:**

- ✎ I dream of a better world when ...*
- ✎ I imagine God's new world to be ...*
- ✎ On the way to realising God's new world, what can we do?*

#### **Working with the children's Bible page:**

*Portray what, for you, represents the future of a better world.*

*4 Being creative: Make a 'House of the Future'*

#### **Being creative:**

*Make a "House of the Future" On a placard/poster/banner or with stones (e.g. shoe boxes, cardboard boxes, bricks ...). On each building block you could paint/draw or write down how you imagine a better world. You could display this "House of the Future" in the church or school, where others could add to it.*

*Further ideas on 'God's new world' can be found on page 17 (WORLDWIDE SURPRISE).*



## CREATED TO LIVE TOGETHER (GENESIS 1-2)

God makes the world – at first heaven and earth, then light and darkness. Then come plants, animals and finally also human beings. He makes them as man and woman. They are to be like him. God looks at the world and says: “Everything is good!” Then he says

to the humans: “I entrust you with everything. Take good care of all the animals and plants.” At the end he rests. So he gives to people also a day in which to rest.



## SET FREE BY GOD (EXODUS 15)

The Israelites are in Egypt. It is going very badly for them, because they are slaves. God, though, does not leave his people alone. He sends Moses to the King of Egypt. In the end, God leads the people of Israel out of slavery. They are free! Miriam is the sister of

Moses. She is grateful to God and sings a song full of joy: "Let us thank God. He has saved us. Finally we are free!" All the women sing, make music and dance for joy.



## WALKING WITH EACH OTHER ON THE WAY (RUTH 1)

Naomi and her family move from Israel to the land of Moab. The Israelites think badly about the women there. However, Naomi's son marries the Moabite woman Ruth. Shortly after, the men of Naomi and Ruth die. The women are very sad. Naomi wants to return to her homeland Israel. Ruth says to Naomi: "I will stay with you. Where you go, I

will go. Your God is my God." Naomi is very happy. Then, she is not alone. In Israel, Ruth marries again and becomes the grandmother of David, the King of Israel. And David is an ancestor of Jesus.



## RULES FOR LIVING TOGETHER (MT 5-7)

Jesus speaks to the people. He stands on a hill. "Love your enemies. Do good to the people who do bad things to you. Look first at your own faults. Then you can look for

the faults of others. Do not judge others. Otherwise you will also be judged. Treat other people in the same way as you want them to treat you."



## BECOMING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR (LK 10)

Jesus talks with a man about the commandment: "You should love God, and your neighbour, and yourself." The man asks: "Who is my neighbour?" Then Jesus says: "On the way from Jerusalem to Jericho a man is attacked. Badly injured, he lies on the ground. A priest and a temple servant, both from his own people, pass him by. Then comes a foreigner from Samaria. The Samaritan cares for the injured man. He lifts him up onto

his donkey and brings him to an inn. Then he gives the innkeeper money and says to him: "Look after this injured man until he is well again." Jesus asks the man: "Who is the neighbour here? What do you think?" The man says: "The good Samaritan!" Then says Jesus: "Go and do the same like him."



## OVERCOMING HOPELESSNESS (LK 24)

Jesus is dead and buried. Two disciples are on the way to the village Emmaus. They are very sad. Then they meet a stranger. It is Jesus, but they don't recognise him. They tell him what has happened to Jesus. The stranger comforts them. When they come to Emmaus, they ask him: "Soon it will be evening. Stay with us!" The disciples invite the

stranger to eat with them. The stranger takes bread and says a prayer. He breaks the bread into pieces and gives it to them. Then the disciples realise: "This is Jesus!" At that moment, he disappears. Quickly, the disciples run back to Jerusalem. The other disciples should also know: Jesus lives!



## TO HOPE FOR GOD'S NEW WORLD (THE NEW JERUSALEM, REV 21-22)

John receives a vision of the future from God. He writes: God's new world is the new Jerusalem. The city will glitter with gold and precious stones. God will be with the peo-

ple and wipe away their tears. No-one is again ill, alone or sad. There is no more evil or injustice. In God's new world the sun shines for all people.

## WORLDWIDE SURPRISE – A CAMPAIGN WITH AND FOR CHILDREN



By exchanging self-made gifts, children's groups come into contact and get to know each other. The campaign combines fun with intercultural learning and international sharing. It provides children with the opportunity to widen their cultural horizons and to promote the idea of a more equitable world.

### **The meaning of partnership**

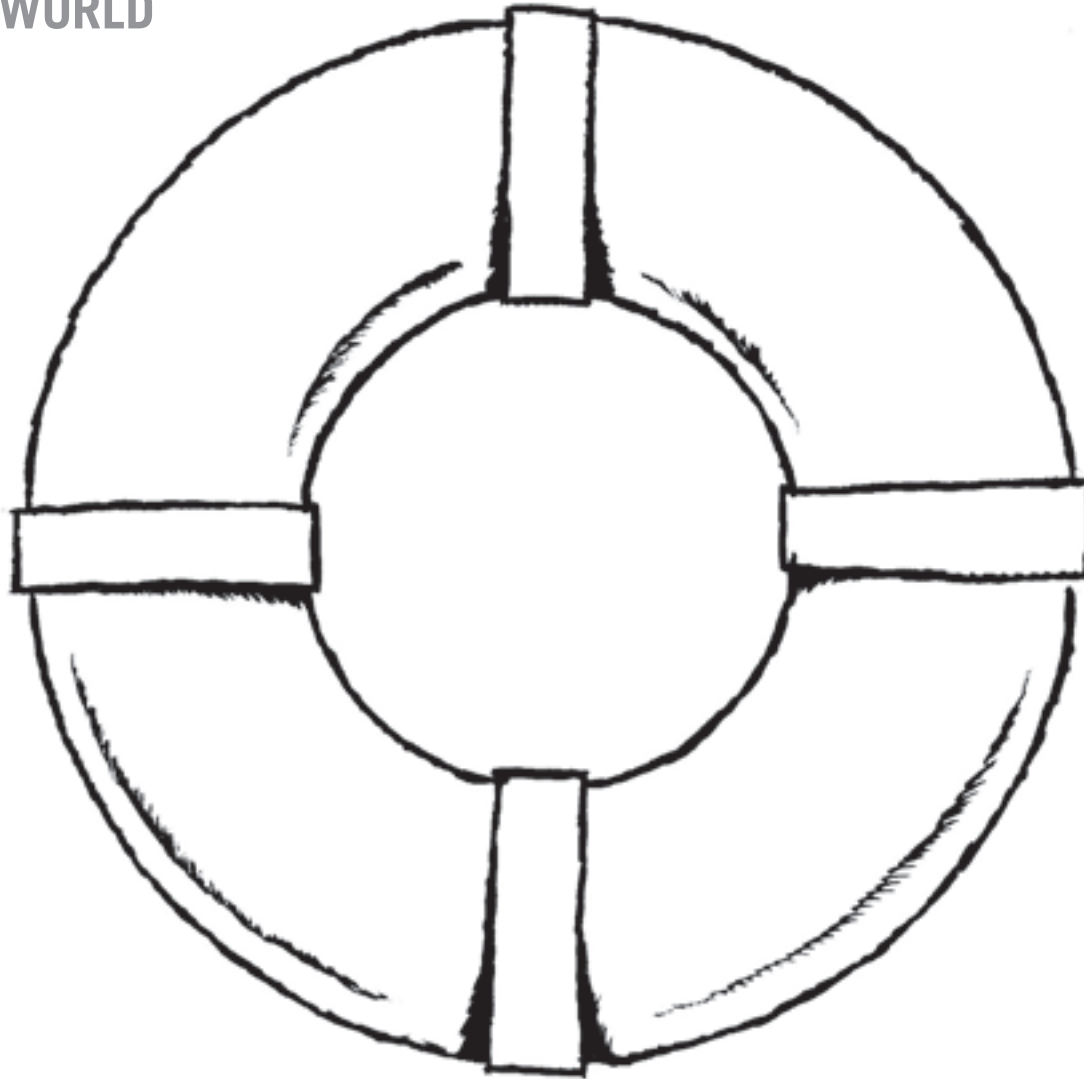
Through involvement in church partnerships, children learn from a young age about solidarity, as well as sisterly and brotherly cooperation, as part of a worldwide community. They grow up connected to each other (Eph. 4, 15). Campaigns, like "Reading the bible through the eyes of another" or WORLDWIDE SURPRISE, help children to encounter each other at the same level – despite different life conditions. Partnership makes it possible to commit together for a better world.

### **An example of how it functions**

A puppet in pink dress and a little sack full of cloves – to receive this was a great joy for the children in a village in Ober-Olm, a village in Germany. At a children's bible day, the Sunday School leader handed over the surprises. He also showed photos from the kindergarten in Tomohon, Indonesia, of the children and their surroundings. Through the accompanying letter, they learned that cloves are a typical spice that grows in Indonesia. Thrilled by the surprise, the children in Ober-Olm also began to do their own handicrafts. Beautiful, colourful 'Wichtel' hand puppets were created that the children sent on the way to their new friends in Indonesia. A first contact is made!



## A LIFE-SAVER FOR OUR WORLD



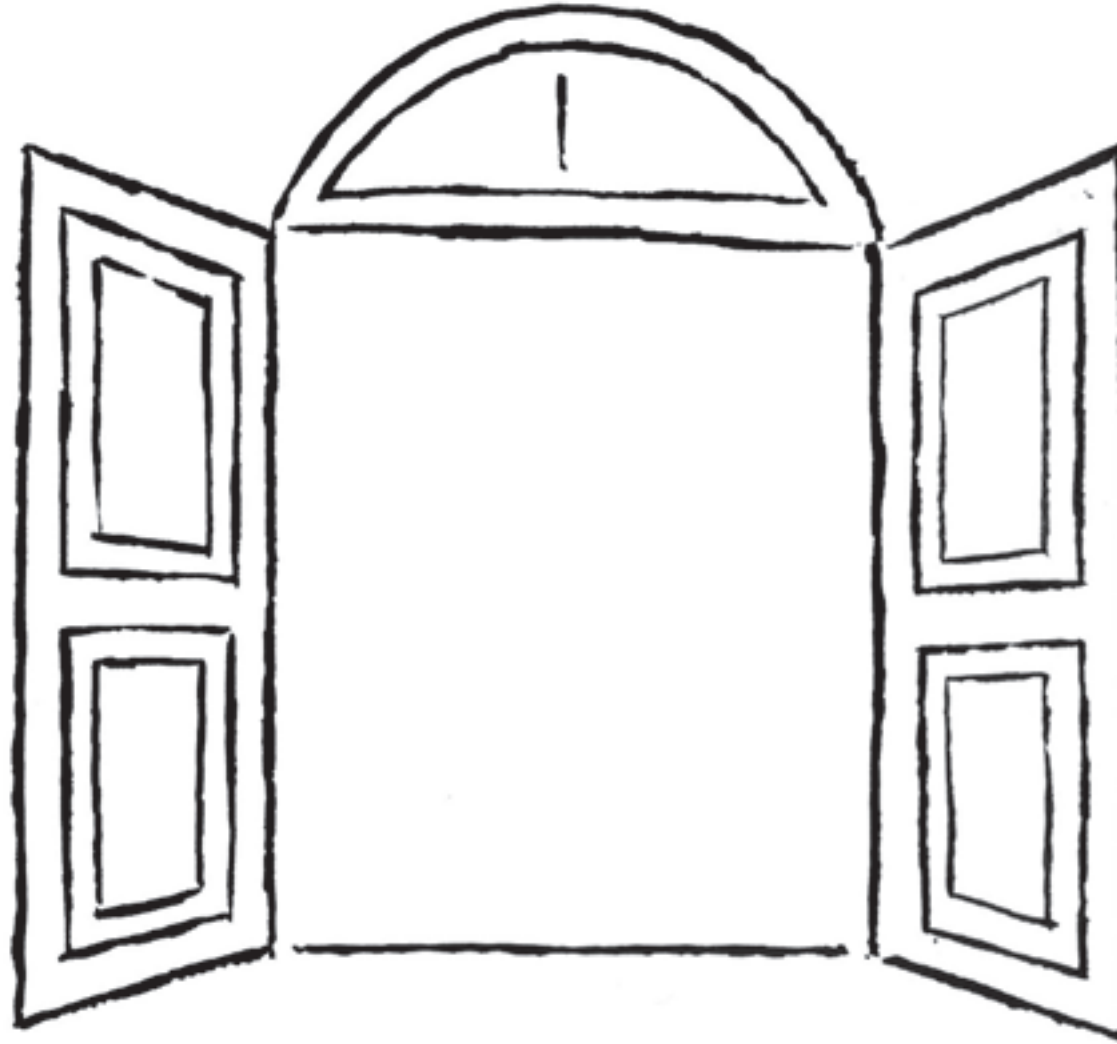
### **Working creatively with “Created to live together” (Genesis 1-2)**

The bible says that it is our task as people to help care for creation. In your immediate natural surroundings, what amazes you or causes you to marvel? What would you like to protect the most in nature? This life-saver, with four sections, is only a model, which you can illustrate in a different way. Draw/paint it onto a large piece of paper, and then

fill it in with all the things that come to mind - you can draw/paint or write in your thoughts.

The life-savers are then presented in the group. Next, they are cut out and glued or strung together to make a large garland, as a symbol of the children’s joint efforts.

## A GATE OF A BETTER WORLD



### **Working creatively with “To hope for God’s new world”**

#### **(The new Jerusalem, Rv. 21-22)**

The bible says that God holds open the gate for us to his new world. What do you hope for when you think about the future of the world? In the open gate, draw/paint or write down your thoughts.

The children speak about their gates in the group. The gate is cut out. Children all over the world can then paste these ‘surprises’ onto cardboard and with it illustrate the city, which is talked about in the Bible, with ‘gates of hope’ from other children.

## HOW TO JOIN IN AND BE A PART OF THE WORLDWIDE SURPRISE CAMPAIGN

### Step by Step:

1. You have heard of the campaign and would like to
  - a) involve children in an already existing partnership
  - b) begin or have a contact, but do not have a partner
2. Arrange a craftwork session in your Sunday School, kindergarten or primary school. Use the materials and designs in this workbook; speak about Germany or invite someone who can speak about another country.
3. The children engage in the handicrafts, making something for their new partner: from the workbook or something typical from their country.
4. Write a letter to the partner group, where you make it clear you would be very happy to receive a reply.
5. Put together a small package with the 'surprises' and a letter that tells about your group. According to if you have a partner or if you are looking for a partner, address the letter:
  - a) to your existing partnership group.
  - b) to WORLDWIDE SURPRISE (if you are looking for a partner group in Germany or Switzerland, please do not forget to write down your own address. We will then look for a children's group, so that your children receive an appropriate response).
6. Take the package to be posted or ask someone travelling to Germany if they can take it for you (ask in the church or in the local/regional church offices if this possibility exists).
7. The children in Germany really look forward to receiving a 'surprise' from overseas – and you can also get excited about receiving a reply!



You can receive further information from:

### **WORLDWIDE SURPRISE**

Vogelsangstr. 62  
70197 Stuttgart  
Germany

info@weltweit-wichteln.org  
www.worldwide-surprise.org

## CREATIVE IDEAS: HOW TO WORK WITH THE PAGES FROM MAKE-YOUR-OWN CHILDREN'S BIBLE

The Children's Bible pages offer a simple recounting of biblical stories as well as key texts, like the Sermon on the Mount. Symbols, landscapes and backgrounds and sketched faces are used to stimulate creative expression. Children are then able, at the end, to hold in their hands their very own children's Bible.

### In the children's Bible you can:

- ✎ Paint/draw with pencils and crayons, felt pens, wax crayons, watercolours – figurative or abstract
- ✎ Use natural materials for glueing, e.g. leaves (Tree), pressed flowers, straw (crib), sand sheets (desert), simple cloth/ fabric for clothes/decorating and woollen thread (clothes, scenes)
- ✎ Coloured, glossy or tracing paper to use for making people, symbols or backgrounds/landscapes
- ✎ Make a Collage with pictures from newspapers or use your own photos
- ✎ Sketch and illustrate a Bible comic.

### You can also glue things in:

- ✎ Photos or a photo feature of a role-play/ theatre piece, from painted or clay scenes, from biblical miniature figures, Pictures that were already drawn by yourself
- ✎ Scenes or figures out of the children's Bible itself
- ✎ Art Pictures (postcards), sculptures ...
- ✎ Illustrations from books etc. about the archaeology/geography of the bible lands
- ✎ Songs that go with the Bible stories (e.g. "When Israel was in Egypt's Land, Let my people go ...")

### You can write in:

- ✎ your own song or rap lyrics to the Bible story
- ✎ Meditative texts, like a prayer or a psalm, or words from the Bible that you have decoratively rewritten
- ✎ Scenes or figures out of the children's Bible itself
- ✎ Summaries of a Bible story



Jesus from a Child in Germany

Moses (Exodus 3)

Angel and Maria (Lk 1)

Jesus from a Child in Ghana