

Whakarite mō te Kirihimete

Preparing for Christmas

Unfailing love and truth have met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed!

Psalm 85:10

This verse from the Psalms sounds like Ihu Karaiti/Jesus' character reference. At te wā Kirihimete/Christmas time, it can be easy to forget Who this celebration is all about. How can we whakarite mō te Kirihimete/prepare for Christmas?

For the four weeks ahead of 25 December, we invite you to use each page as a focus. You'll find a colouring picture, that after trimming (as shown) when all four are complete, create a stained-glass window.

On Christmas Eve, gather for the final activity. Decide which of the crowns your whānau/household will use to write a prayer into, fixing it on the cross.

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Tūmanako

Hope

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Kua whānau nei hoki he tamaiti mā tātou, kua homai he tama ki a tātou; ā ki runga ki tōna pokohiwi te rangatiratanga; nā, ko te ingoa e huaina ki a ia ko Whakamīharo, ko Kaiwhakatakoto Whakaaro, ko te Atua Kaha Rawa, ko te Matua Mutungakore, ko te Rangatira o te Rongomau.

Pānuitia/Something to read

Before Jesus was born, there were many people who spoke about His birth. The words they spoke were called prophesies. Each time, the words made a statement about who Jesus is. Look at the list from Isaiah – Wonderful counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah was giving a hint that this baby would be just like God. Look at those words again – counsellor, God, Father, and Prince. All these remind us that Jesus was not only just like God, He was also Someone we could trust, and know personally.

Pātaihia/Something to ask

Imagine if, before you were born, someone spoke about you, announcing your birth. What do you think they would have said?

Karakia/Prayer idea

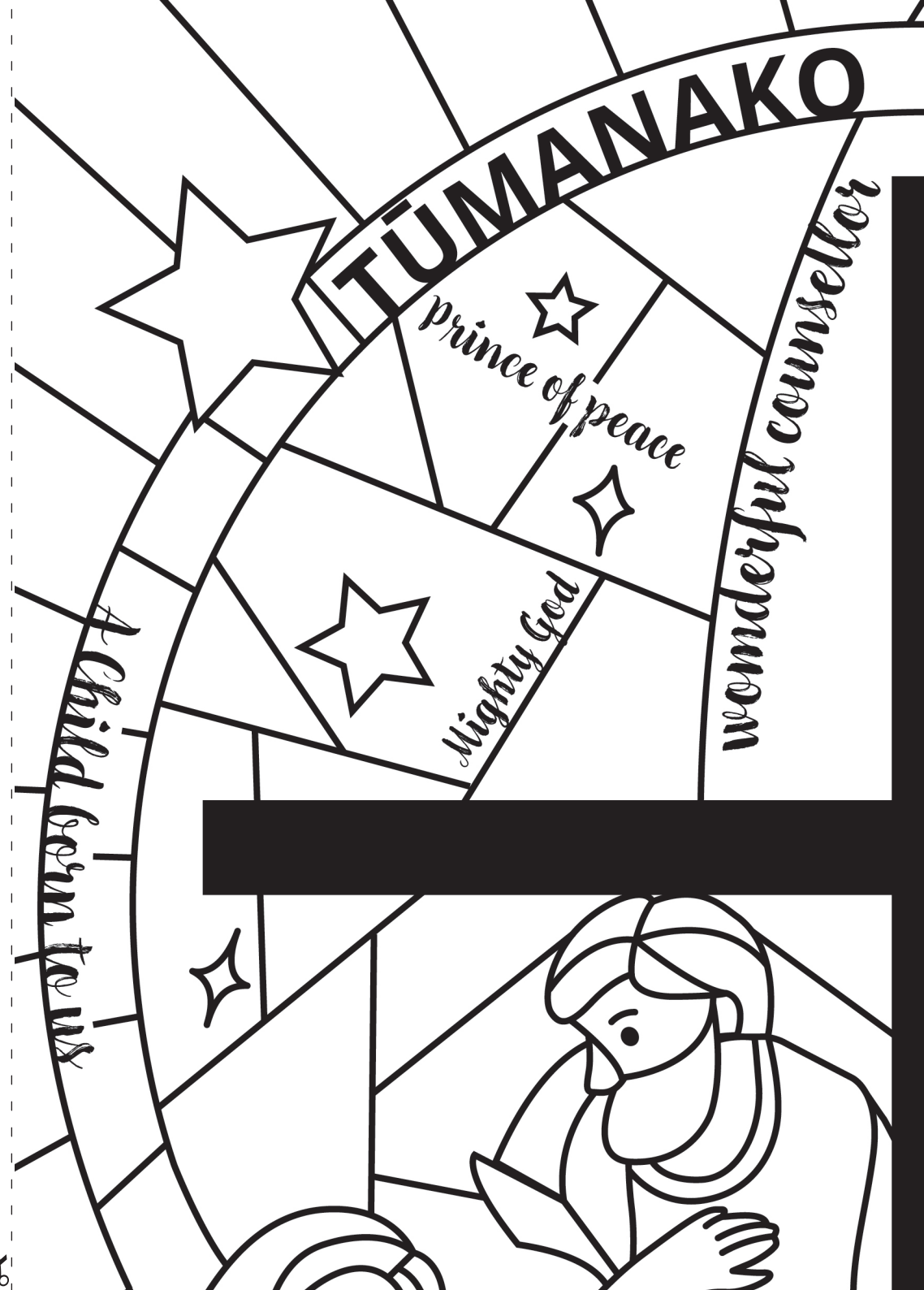
Have you ever thanked God for sharing Who He is through Ihu Karaiti/Jesus, His Son? What part of knowing Jesus do you really appreciate? Express your thanks.

Kimihia ngā mea/Something to find

In the picture, can you find the words of Isaiah spoke?

Mahi aroha/Provide hope for others

Find a street pantry and place groceries in there.
Be the hope for others. Build a street pantry with the help of neighbours.
Take food supplies to a local kai/food bank.
Have a very simple dinner. Use the money you have saved to contribute to a kai/food aid program.



Whakapono

Faith

The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

John 1:9

Ko te Māramatanga pono tērā, e mārama ai ngā tāngata katoa e haere mai ana ki te ao.

Pānuitia/Something to read

Have you ever gone into a room and tried to switch something on that makes it totally dark? What about going into a dark room and switching something on that makes it light? That's because light overcomes darkness. Light allows us to see things as they really are.

Pātaihia/Something to ask

What does it mean to show and tell how good Ihu Karaiti/Jesus is?

Karakia/Prayer idea

If someone asks you about Ihu Karaiti/Jesus, do you think about how good He is? Together, consider how to listen well and pray that you will be given a moment to be 'a light'. Pray for places of darkness, where Ihu Karaiti/Jesus' light is needed.

Kimihia ngā mea/Something to find

Can you find four lights in the picture?

Mahi aroha/Take action

Do something for your community. Maybe you could build a street library, inviting neighbours to participate. Could you donate books you have enjoyed previously to an existing street library?

Have you seen something that needs fixing in your community?

Is it little enough to be fixed by you (like picking up rubbish in the park), could it be a project you invite others to join, or do you need to advise the local council?



Harikoa

Joy

All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, but Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and thought about them often.

Luke 2:18-19

A mīharo ana ngā kai whakarongo katoa ki ēnei mea, i kōrerotia nei ki a rātou e ngā hepara. Ko Meri ia i āta rongoa i ēnei mea katoa, whakaaroaro ai i roto i tōnangākau

When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Matthew 2:10-11

Pānuitia/Something to read

Author Max Lucado writes about the Bible being like a fence full of knotholes through which we can peek but not see the whole picture. It's like a scrapbook of photos capturing people in encounters with God, but not always recording the result. Imagine you were able to ask a question of the shepherds, the wise men, or Mary. What would you ask? Perhaps you'd ask the shepherds whether as time went on, were there people who weren't astonished by the story of Ihu Karaiti/Jesus' birth. Did the wise men find Ihu Karaiti/Jesus was excited by the koha/gifts they brought and if so, did He realise the significance of them? And Mary, what part of your experience with the shepherds did you treasure that made you smile?

Pātaihia/Something to ask

When you think of Jesus, I wonder what you treasure and think about often.

Karakia/Prayer idea

Pray for joy in the lives of the people in your street.

Kimihia ngā mea/Something to find

Can you find three treasures that brought joy?

Mahi aroha/Bring some joy

What could you do for an elderly neighbour or friend that would make them smile? Send some joy-filled TXT messages to friends you haven't heard from in a while. Tie eco-friendly balloons to letterboxes (with twine or jute) in your street to bring joy. Hold a street party.



Maungārongo

Peace

"Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."

Luke 1:78-79

Pānuitia/Something to read

The Bible passage is words from Zechariah. He was unwilling to acknowledge the angel's message, and so from that point on, Zechariah was unable to speak. When his son was born, Zechariah wrote, 'His name is John.' Then God let him to speak again. Zechariah started praising God and spoke out a prophecy, which finished with the verses above. Imagine being unable to speak because you wouldn't believe what God said would happen. The whole neighbourhood was full of wonder and news spread of what had happened. Imagine what would happen in your community if an event like this occurred and people heard there was a pathway to peace.

The book authored by Dr Luke was written to give certainty to followers of Ihu Karaiti/Jesus. He makes it clear that he was not an eyewitness of the events documented. But we can count on his writings. His narrative poses a question to us. Will we believe that God can do what He says He will do, that He will strengthen us in our times of difficulty? This requires us to consider the truth against our own feelings and fears.

Pātaihia/Something to ask

Where do you think peace is needed – in our world, in our country, in our community?

Karakia/Prayer idea

Pray for your community. Pray for places in the world that need peace.

Kimihia ngā mea/Something to find

How many stars can you find?

Mahi aroha/Add peace to your community

Make a bunting to hang at your house and write on each the names of parts of the world where peace is needed.

Go for a walk in your neighbourhood praying for the places you walk past.

Create some peace in your home by decluttering an area of your house. Can you repurpose items for others to use?

MAUNGARONGO

*Unfailing love and truth have
met together. Righteousness
and peace have kissed!*

Psalm 85:10



Aroha

Love

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, that the time of the LORD's favour has come."

Luke 4:18-19

Kei ahau te wairua o te Ariki, nāna nei hoki ahau i whakawahi, hei kauwhau i te rongopai ki te hunga rawakore; kua tonoa ahau e ia ki te kauwhau ki ngā herehere, kia haere noa, ki ngā matapo kia titiro, ki te tuku i te hunga e maru ana kia haere noa atu, Ki te kauwhau i te tau manakohanga mai a te Ariki.

Pānuitia/Something to read

Jesus' good news is that those who we might see as 'outsiders', like the poor, those who cannot see, and people who don't have access to a lot of resources are people just like us. When people listened to Luke's message, it made sense that Ihu Karaiti/Jesus would have said this in the temple, as they were matching it with Mary's song of praise from Luke 1. But for the people who heard it in the temple when Ihu Karaiti/Jesus spoke, they were not happy.

They felt He was speaking out of line.

Sometimes when we stand up for someone who is seen as an outsider, we too find people are not happy with our perspective. It takes a lot of courage to speak out for vulnerable people.

Using the scripture, re-read Luke 4:18-19 as a king. Ihu Karaiti/Jesus, king of Israel.

And read it again, thinking about Ihu Karaiti/Jesus wearing a crown of thorns? Do you hear a difference in the words?

Pātaihia/Something to ask

I wonder what Good News you would share.

Karakia/Prayer idea

Write a prayer on the crown of your household's choice before placing in the centre of your design and pray this together on Christmas Eve.

Mahi aroha/Spread love

What could you do to demonstrate love over Christmas/New Year?

Have you considered inviting someone to a to kai/a meal who might never return the favour (check out Hebrews 13:2)?

