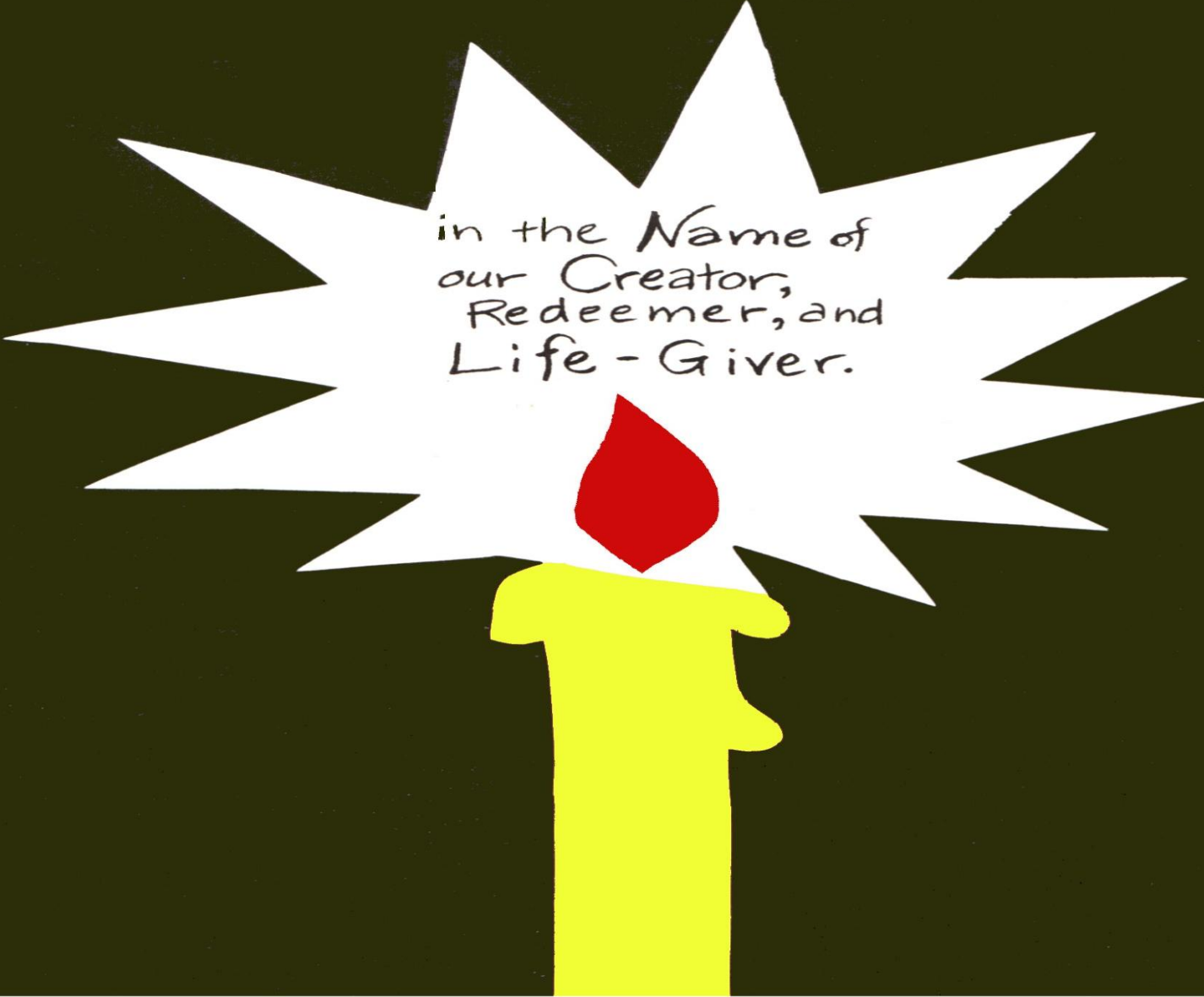


THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CRAFT BOOK



Burton Everist

A yellow candle with a red flame is positioned at the bottom center. Above the flame is a large, white, multi-pointed starburst shape. Inside the starburst, the text "in the Name of our Creator, Redeemer, and Life-Giver." is written in a black, handwritten-style font.

in the Name of
our Creator,
Redeemer, and
Life-Giver.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CRAFT BOOK



by
Burton Everist

Illustrated by
Joan Reynolds

ADAPTED FOR COMPUTER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Page 42 The stanza from "Now the Green Blade Riseth" (tr. J.M.C. Crum) is from *The Oxford Book of Carols*, published by the Oxford University Press. It is used by permission of the publisher.

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Printed in the United States of America

What's the Christian Family Craft Book?

It's a book for Christian Families who want to create crafts with Christian themes.



It's a book suggesting crafts a family can make together easily, including children of almost every age (except infants-in-arms — but they can smile at the fun that your family is having.)



It will give you ideas and simple directions for ornaments and household decorations that remind your family and your guests of the Lord.



It's a book of crafts to make for birthdays gifts and greetings, Christmas presents and ornaments, everyday cards to cheer folks up and tell them of God's love in Jesus Christ..



It's a book of craft ideas prepared to help your family think still more deeply about

our **Creator** - even as your family creates,

our **Redeemer** - even as you save and give more lively use to "scraps," and

our **Lord and Life-Giver,**
the **Holy Spirit** - as new ways of seeing inspire you.



It's a book that the larger family of
God can work with, at Sunday Schools,
and summer programs, family nights
and youth groups, married couples'
and singles' clubs.



It's a book
that grew out of
twenty years of
youth work, eleven
years of pastoral ministry
in local congregations, count-
less education workshops, and
sixteen years of stimulating family
life with only one wife, three active
boys, three cats (successively), one
dog, and many guests welcome to our home
from Africa, Asia, Europe, South America
and our own homeland continent, all the creative
craft of our Creator, Redeemer, and
Life-Giver **GOD!**



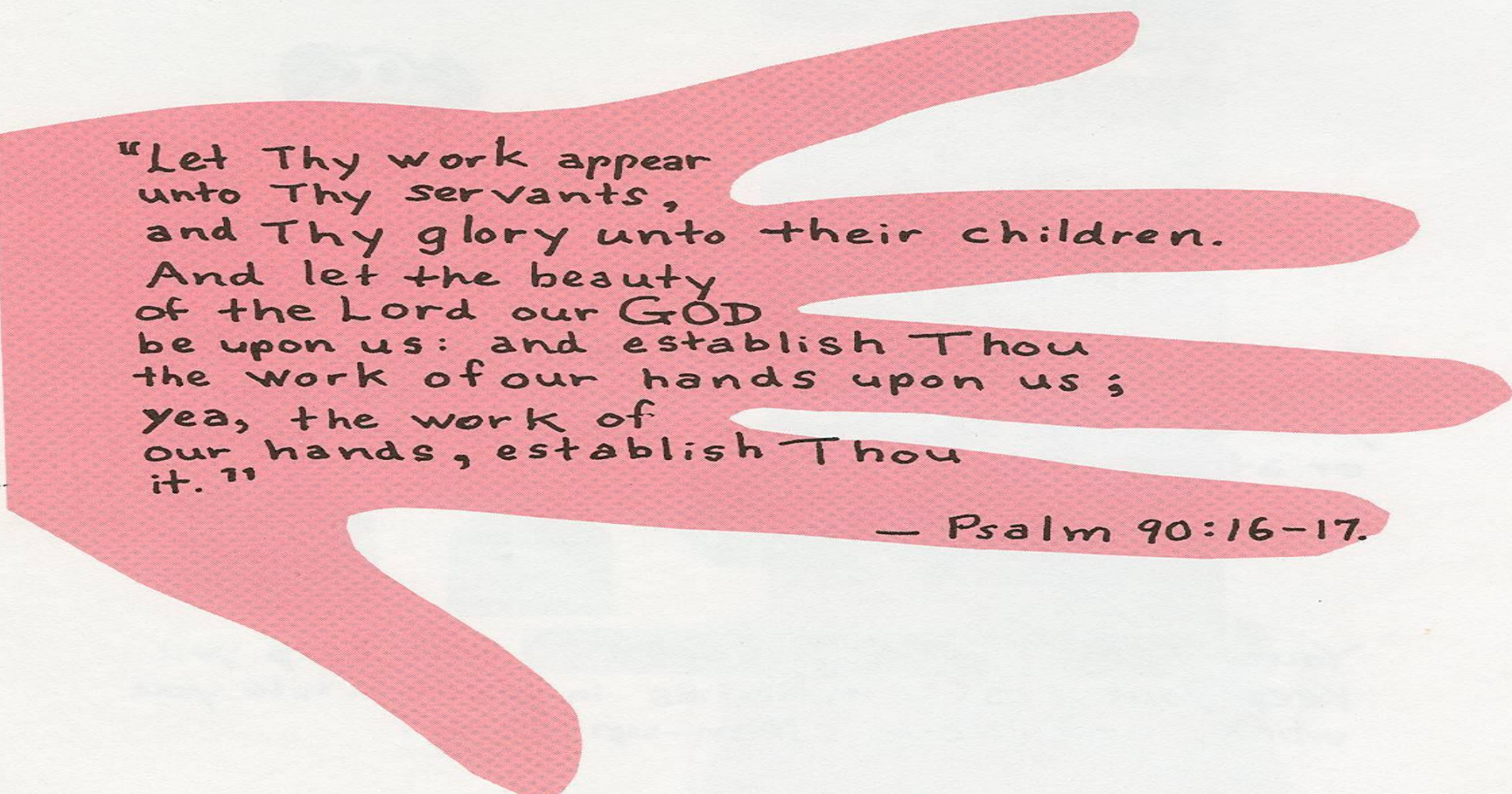
The Christian Family Craft Book is most of all a book for any family who knows that **DOING** together and **PLAYING** together in Christ's Name is a delightful way of **STAYING** together, but above all, of **PRAYING** together.

We suggest that you begin each project, even before you start reading about it, in the Name of our Creator, Redeemer, and Life-Giver. This is a way of giving your craft creation to the Lord of all Creation.

It would be a pleasant thing to hum a hymn or sing a song as you work together (at least between moments of fun conversations and thoughtful reflections).



When your work is over, stop to thank GOD for the gift of time, materials, and others with whom (or for whom) you create. Then, perhaps, each time you look at the work you have done you will not think as did the plum-thumb Jack "What a good boy am I", but you will pray with the Psalmist :



"Let Thy work appear
unto Thy servants,
and Thy glory unto their children.
And let the beauty
of the Lord our GOD
be upon us: and establish Thou
the work of our hands upon us;
yea, the work of
our hands, establish Thou
it."

— Psalm 90:16-17.

INTRODUCING THE CRAFTS...

(A DESCRIPTIVE TABLE OF CONTENTS)

But **FIRST** you'll meet some ideas for a **FAMILY CRAFT CENTER**! I find that many activities don't happen in families because no one can find the equipment at the right time. Your **FAMILY CRAFT CENTER** will store

scissors,

glue,

paper,

thread,

wire,

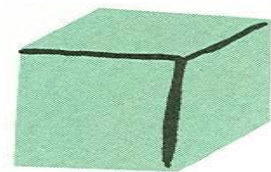
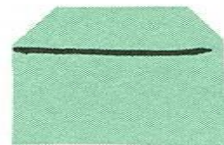
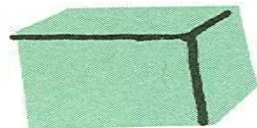
felt-tip pens,

egg-shell scraps, and

nails just where you want them to be.



It won't cost much either, and you will be recycling boxes and other containers that you usually see thrown away in the stores or at schools.



Your **FAMILY CRAFT CENTER** will help you keep your craft materials in place while you work, and save clean-up time.

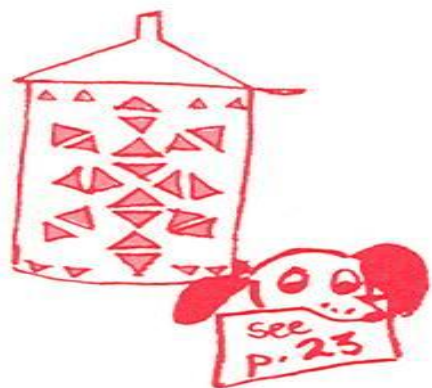
The first two crafts to do are **SIMPLE CANDLE HOLDERS** two very different candle holders. It is appropriate that we begin as did the Creator, who said "Let there be light!" For us who separate our saying from our doing, it's not that simple to make holders for the light, but the doing will be delightful.

First you might make lovely **STAINED PLASTIC CANDLE HOLDERS** At a recent youth gathering in New England I "discovered" a new process using felt-tip pens and ordinary plastic glasses to design glowing candle-holders. The young people and adults came up with exciting designs right there on the spot! You'll see some examples of their handiwork.



Then you could dig out your old tin cans, top them with funnels and create **TIN-CAN CANDLE HOLDERS!**

This is an adaptation of a craft from Spain, so I'm told. It also gives any home a lovely way to let the light shine.



The second set of projects are two ways of doing

PERSONAL CHRISTIAN GREETING CARDS

In spite of Hallmark's claim, "the very best" is still hand-made and homemade. We keep our Christmas cards for awhile, and the ones we save the longest are those handmade cards.



CONSTRUCTION PAPER CARDS

were an old idea I dreamed up as an assistant for a Christian Day School art class. Sixth graders did a beautiful job with them, and many others do now.

The bold colors of construction paper, accented sometimes with a bit of foil or a felt-tip pen, are bright spots for any shut-in, memorable for any marriage anniversary, and a keepsake for any occasion.

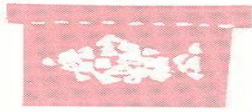
For several years in a row my grade-school children have come home with pictures done in crayon-resist. They never fail to look exciting and refreshing. So why not transform them into miniatures in making some

CRAYON-RESIST CARDS

? Vivid colors against bold backgrounds share the joy of the Lord in many ways



Mosaics are an ancient art, one of the earliest used to praise the Lord of All. Our third project adapts the mosaic method to family crafts.



Small wooden and cardboard boxes (tin ones, too) are transformed with **EGG SHELL MOSAIC** craft. For such small work the earliest Christian symbol, the fish, or other symbols such as the cross, the chi-rho, the star, and the open tomb are best. It is a good way to use dyed egg shells or plain white ones.

The final project is an old favorite of mine that occurred to me while I was still in college:

PERSONALIZED CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS

Those one-colored bright, shiny Christmas balls became for me an inexpensive but meaningful gift to share with whole families whose homes I was invited to share at Christmas-tide.

Sometimes the individual's name would suggest a Christmas-related symbol. In some instances I would do the designs in folks' homes, and the design would grow out of our conversations. Many of these ornaments still adorn Christmas trees!

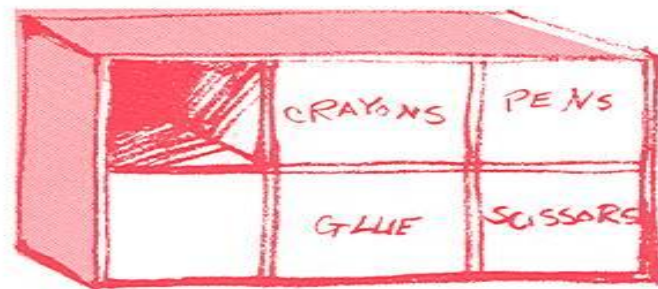
FAMILY CRAFT CENTER

To encourage frequent family activity, it is a good idea to develop a place where your family can sit right down and have everything at hand: scissors, glue, construction paper, felt-tip pens, scraps, and other items. Some families have family rooms, ideal places to store materials in nearby cupboards.

Most families don't have extra room where crafts can be readily at hand. For both situations this chapter describes a craft storage system that you can use anywhere. It includes portable storage units, materials you will store, and some tools you will need.

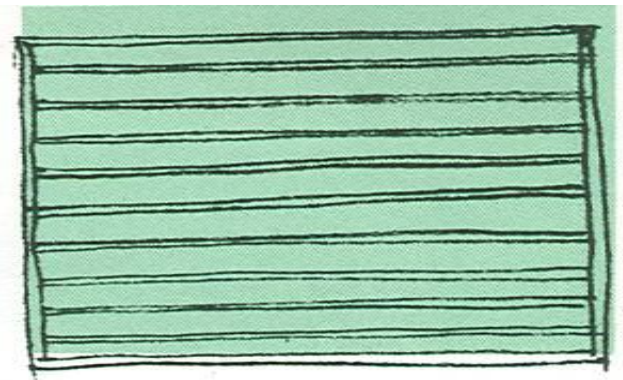
LITTLE BOXES ; BIG BOXES

My favorite storage system uses American cheese boxes. I get them at a high-volume dairy store six at a time. If possible, I like also to have the larger box in which the six are usually delivered to the store. In the latter box, the smaller ones can be stored in sets, easily carried, and a single box can be taken out without upsetting the others.

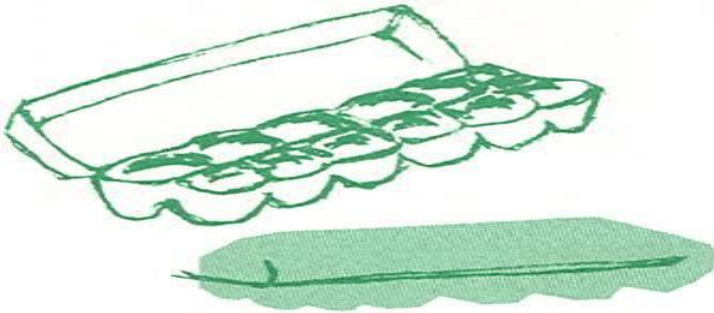


Larger boxes such as clear plastic shoe boxes, often on specials at discount stores, offer excellent stackable storage units. Unlike cardboard cheese boxes, they don't absolutely need to be labeled (but a label is still helpful). Actually, any group of identical boxes will do quite well. You may wish to look at your storage closet or shelves to decide the size box that fits best.

A different type of storage unit can be obtained from schools that have a certain kind of hot lunch program. This is a set of trays on which frozen meals have been set for rapid heating. The trays are clean, large cardboard, and provide space for larger poster-size paper, magazines, and rulers. I usually remove one of the trays to make it easier to withdraw the others. The large, strong cardboard in the extra tray can be used for other projects (jigsaw puzzles, poster backing, etc.).

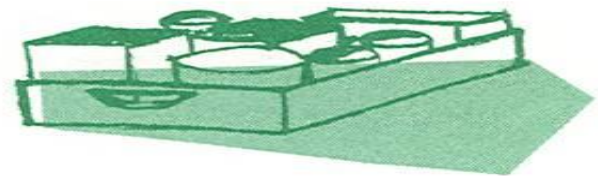


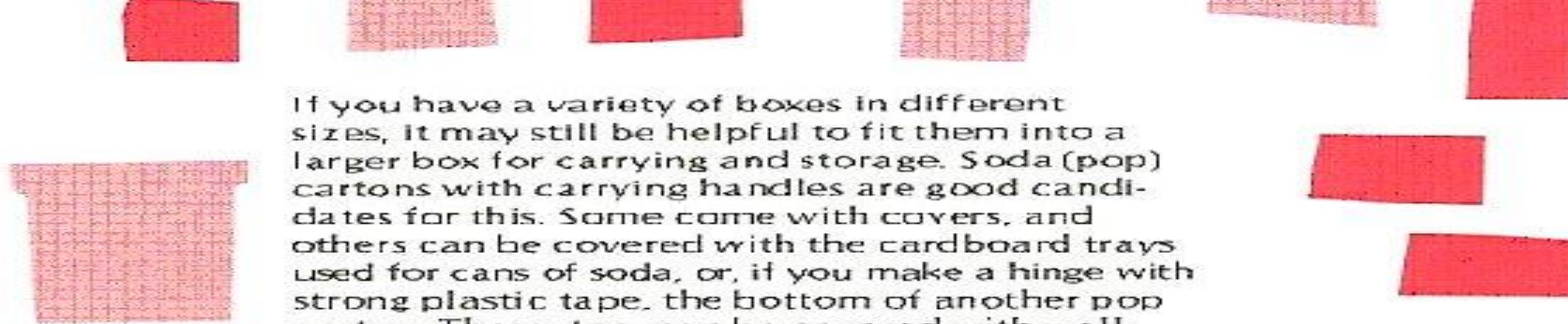
If you are recycling cardboard boxes you may wish to cover them with wallpaper (especially if you have some that matches your storage area or your work area). You will still want to add a label at one or both ends.



↖ You can get free samples at most wallpaper stores.

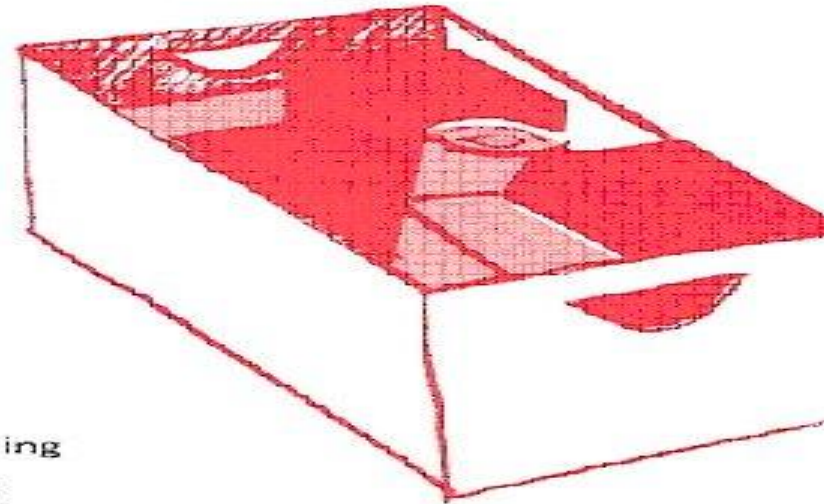
Egg cartons or muffin tins make excellent sorting trays and storage places if you cover them with plastic wrap to keep each section in place. The egg cartons that close stack well. Since you may be doing the eggshell mosaics, the carton will be a natural item and will permit you to sort the colors of eggshells, too.





If you have a variety of boxes in different sizes, it may still be helpful to fit them into a larger box for carrying and storage. Soda (pop) cartons with carrying handles are good candidates for this. Some come with covers, and others can be covered with the cardboard trays used for cans of soda, or, if you make a hinge with strong plastic tape, the bottom of another pop carton. These, too, can be covered with wallpaper or contact paper, and labeled accordingly.

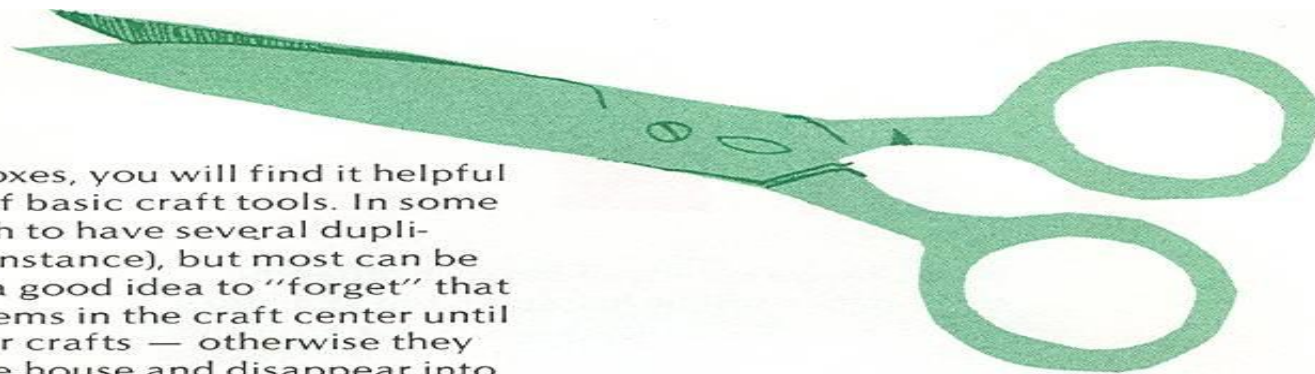
*Soda containers
work very well.* →



There are, of course, also the portable sets of sorting drawers sold for hardware or sewing purposes that you could purchase and use. These are particularly good for small items you don't want to lose, it shouldn't be necessary to have more than one of these sets of drawers.



Into one or more boxes, you will find it helpful to pack a number of basic craft tools. In some cases, you may wish to have several duplicates (scissors, for instance), but most can be one-of-a-kind. It is a good idea to "forget" that you have stowed items in the craft center until you want to do your crafts — otherwise they will drift around the house and disappear into drawers or cabinets.



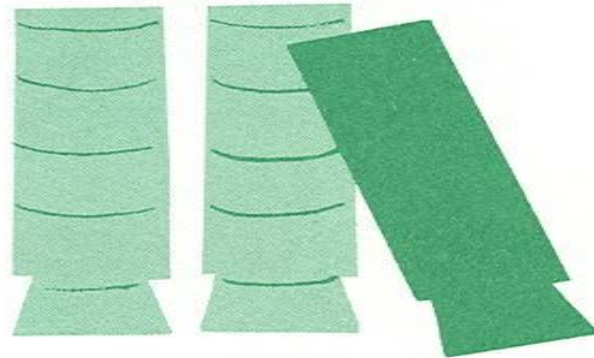
Scissors — at least one good 9" pair, and several smaller snub-nosed (baby) pairs. The baby scissors should have a slight curve to them — they cut curved letters more easily. It is a good idea to store the 9" pair in a plastic sheath or a foam casing.

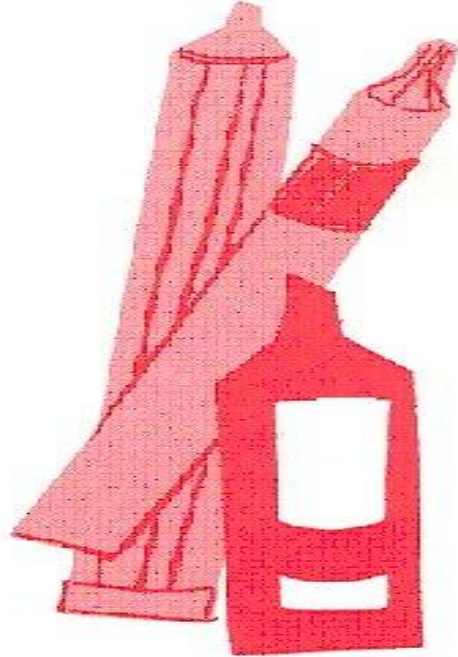


A good-sized bottle of white glue should be stocked, along with several smaller self-dispensing bottles of the same glue. You can refill the smaller bottles, giving more members of the family ready access to the glue when they need it.

For gluing paper to paper, you will want to squirrel away several glue sticks. These little glue applicators have none of the risks of white glue (spilling), all of the advantages of rubber cement (holding paper securely), and can be easily worked by tiny hands. They look like lipsticks and work like lipsticks: turn the bottom and the glue rises. It is important to cap the glue securely at the end of projects. These sticks come in at least two sizes, but the smaller ones are the most easily held and used.

(By the way, if your white glue dispensers clog, soaking them in hot water helps open them up.)



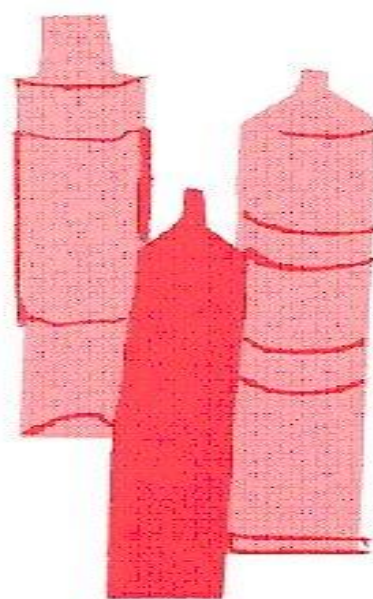


Felt-tip pens, both permanent and washable, narrow and wide-tipped, can be purchased in sets, already cased. Most cases do not endure handling, so they might as well be packed into labeled boxes in your center right from the start. Capping these pens is, of course, crucial. Several other pens similar to felt-tips (nylon, liquid ball-point) are also useful. You will want to experiment with them.

The "washable" pens are not unlike watercolors (in fact, they are water-based). They smear easily if water gets on them. This trait can be used to get the sort of fuzzy edges that watercolor paints give — so you may wish to experiment with them.

The permanent pens will be used in the candle-holder craft. Different companies make pens with different chemical bases. Some will "etch" into the plastic itself, giving an interesting effect. Others will color the plastic but not etch the material, creating still another contrasting effect.

Art stores have them.



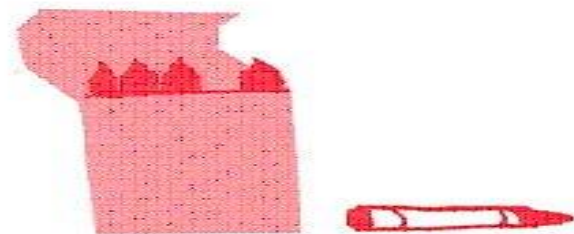
(Permanent markers are available at many dime and discount stores.)

Crayons, the old standby, should find a special place in your craft storage center. It is not a good idea to rely upon the children's stockpile.

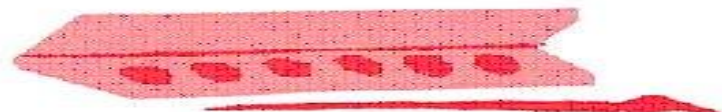
These get lost, broken to small bits, and otherwise become more difficult to use. Several sets of the greatest variety of colors would be worth stocking. It is also a good idea to buy a set of larger crayons for broad strokes. Some even come as flat sticks.



Watercolors (the kind you get in the 10¢ store) are also indispensable to your craft center. You will need them for the crayon-resist cards. You may wish, however, to use water-base tempera colors. These will work as well as watercolors.

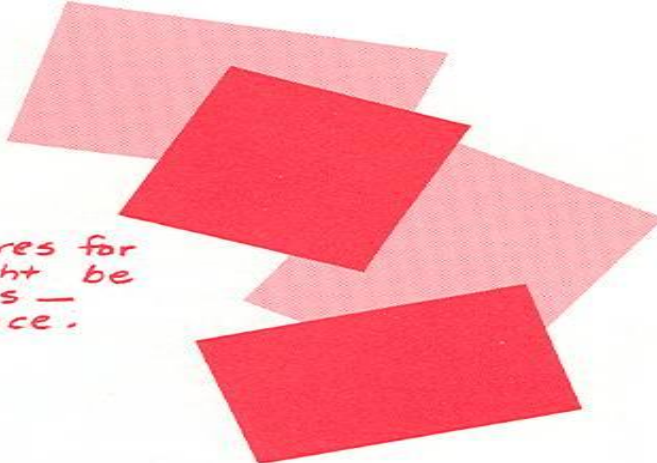


Although, in this book, we don't suggest uses for colored chucks, several boxes would be in order for other crafts you create or adapt.



If you like to experiment with papers you will want to consider blotting paper, typing paper, blueprint paper, tracing papers, even the pink "step one" paper that is thrown away in the 3-M two-step copying process.

Try both art and stationery stores for papers. 3-M pink "paper" might be given to you by the 3-M dealers — it can be used by them only once.

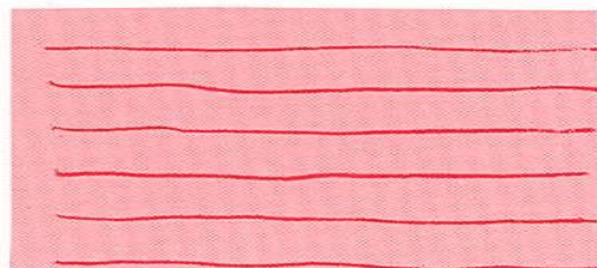


A good ruler, such as the C-Thru ruler with its simple system of parallel line-making, is essential. You may also want a small T-square, a triangle, and a protractor. A compass is important for making quick circles, but caution is important in its use by children. X-acto type knives can come in handy for some cutting tasks too.

A good X-acto set with attachments for carving as well as cutting.

You will think of other items to store, ready for carrying to your craft center. Remember: avoid borrowing these items for odd jobs around the house, or they will not be at hand when you want them. Having your craft center stocked and ready, will encourage your family to create for yourselves and others.

MEMO: I want to add:



I like the Pentecost Gospel: Jesus appears to the fear-filled disciples, locked away behind closed doors. He breathes upon them, sending them out as the Father sent Him. He tells them they now can share forgiveness — His forgiveness — with others. I think of not being forgiven as being locked behind closed doors.

On the evening of that first day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear...
Jesus came and stood among them, and said to them,
Peace Be With You!

St. John



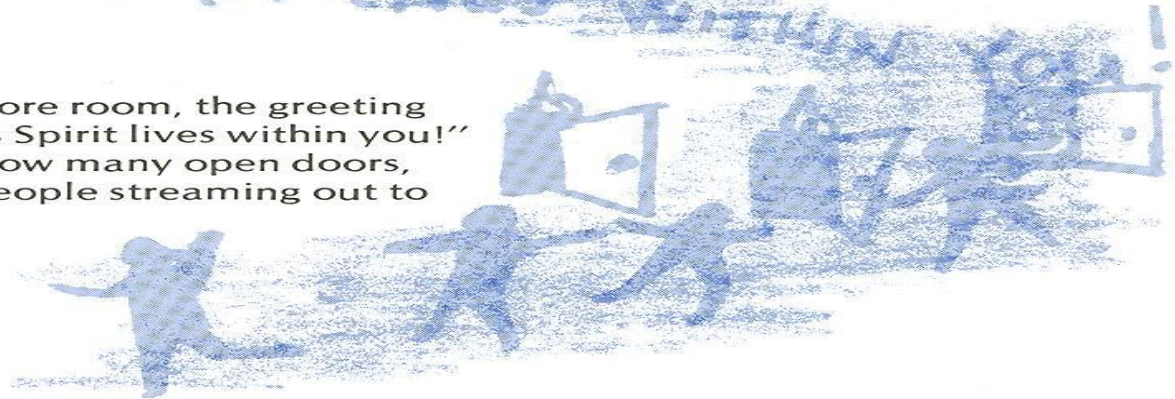
So, I'll begin with Jesus, robed in white, standing within the door, reaching out his hands to the disciples. And this cover picture will say: "OPEN UP!"

OPEN

UP!

CHRIST'S SPIRIT LIVES WITHIN YOU!

Inside, where I have more room, the greeting will continue: "Christ's Spirit lives within you!" And the picture will show many open doors, flame-touched, with people streaming out to life.



THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CRAFT BOOK



SIMPLE CARDS



Burton Everist

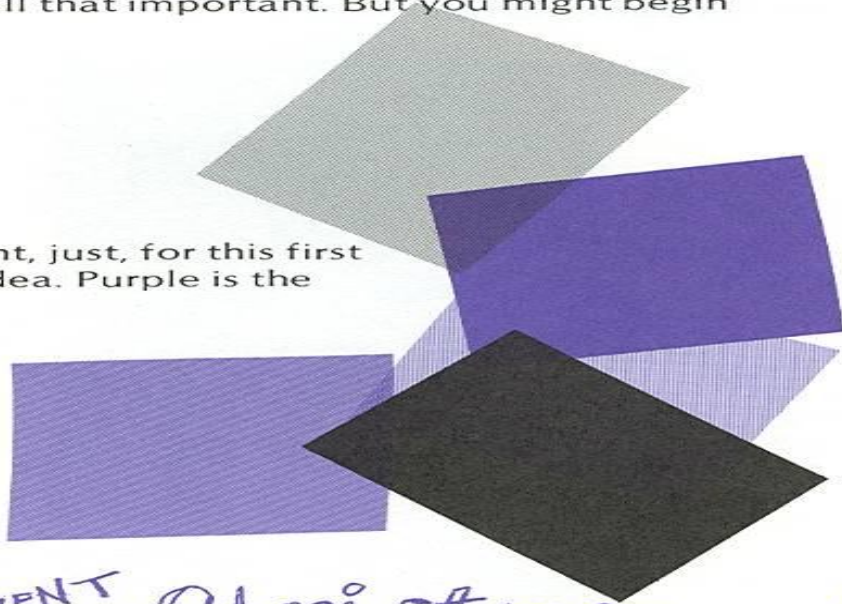
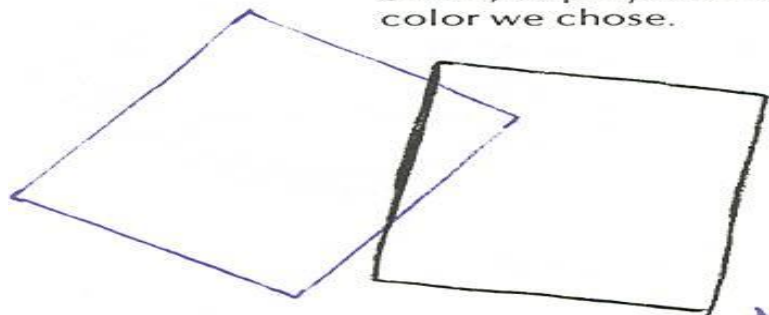
SIMPLE CARDS

CONSTRUCTION PAPER CARDS

Almost every school and many homes have construction paper. Such paper comes in all sorts of colors these days, not just dark purple, brown, red, orange, yellow, and blue. But also purple, flaming red, cerise, bright blue, shocking pink, and more . . .

A typical size of construction paper is 9" x 12". It comes in many other sizes as well. The size really isn't all that important. But you might begin with the 9" x 12" dimensions.

Select any color you want, just, for this first effort, to play with the idea. Purple is the color we chose.



Pick your theme. Is this to be a Christmas card? Or for a birthday? Whatever you decide, stick to the theme you have chosen and finish it out.

Anniversary

VALENTINES

Baptisms
Birthdays

Weddings

ADVENT

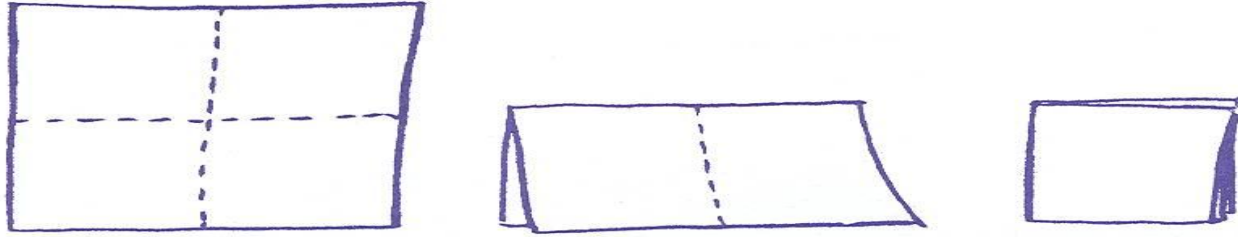
Christmas

New Year's

Name of Jesus

PENTECOST

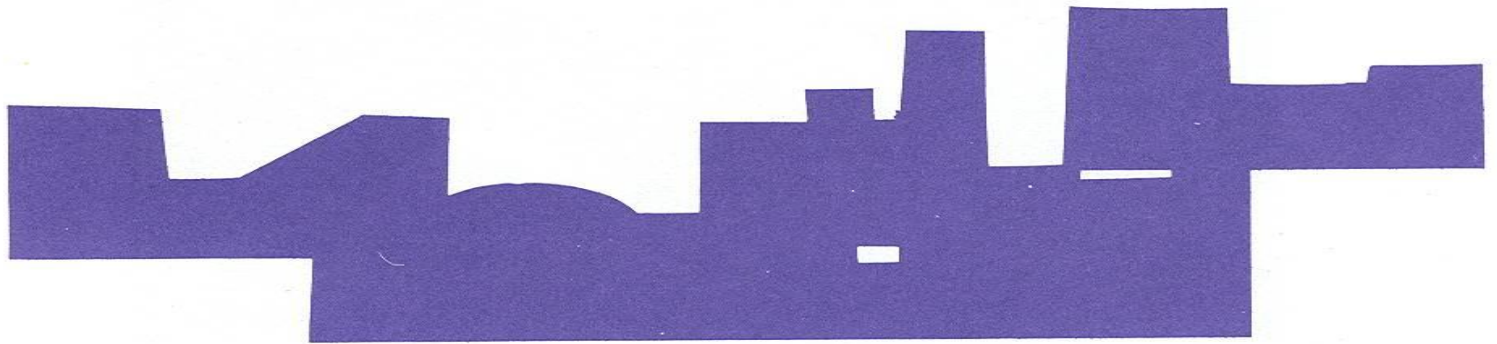
We chose Christmas. We folded the paper over once (either way is all right), and then once more the other way.



What can we do with a purple card at Christmas-time? A look at the beginnings of the Gospels helps. John 1:9-18 strikes home. Especially 1:9.

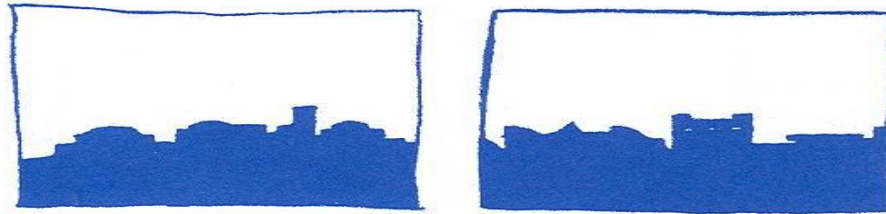
“The true Light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world.” It makes me think of Jesus’ words, quoting Isaiah, “The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light!”

Darkness and Light! That will fit the card well. Why not a dark red for part of the city.



City outlines are easy to do. But should it be Bethlehem, or New Haven, or Chicago?

New Haven on the inside, Bethlehem on the outside!

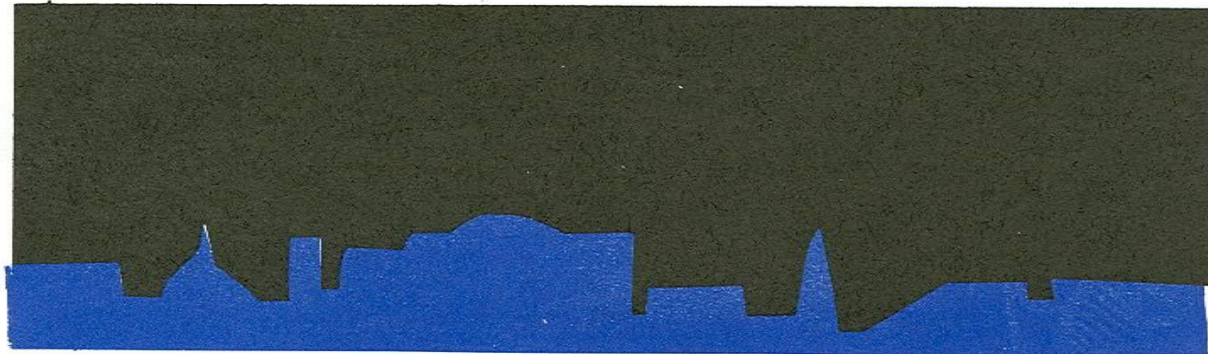


No, the other way round. A darkened New Haven skyline on the outside . . .



And a brightly lit Bethlehem inside.

(I finally decided on the same inside as on the outside.)



We could type the words,
or print them,
or cut them out,
or cut blocks *and* print them.

THESE are
THE

WORDS

WORDS

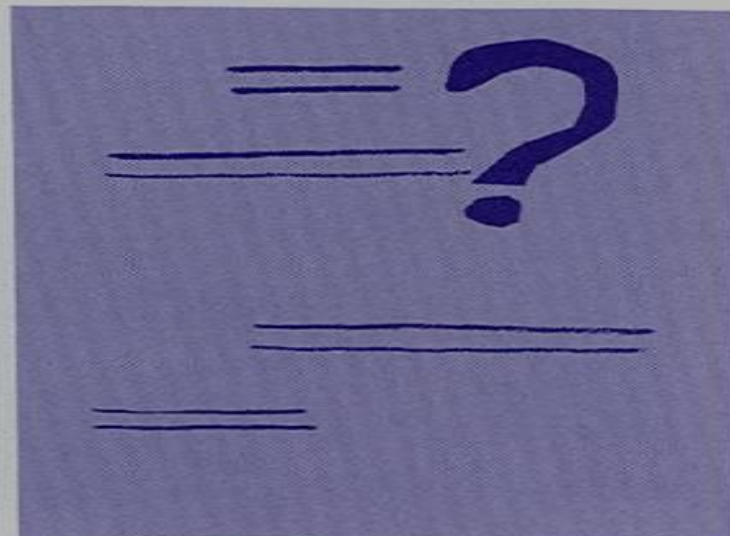
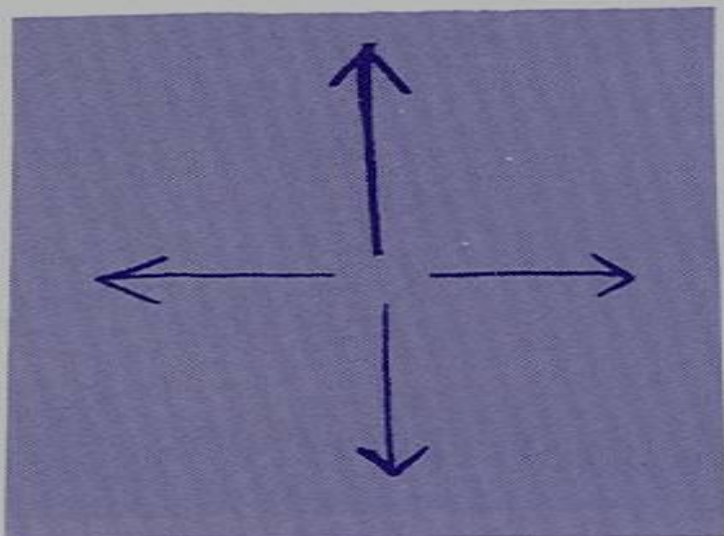
WORDS



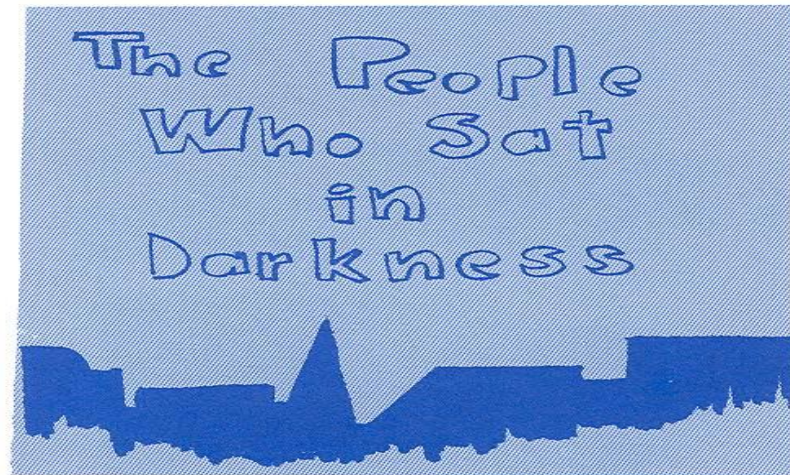
to



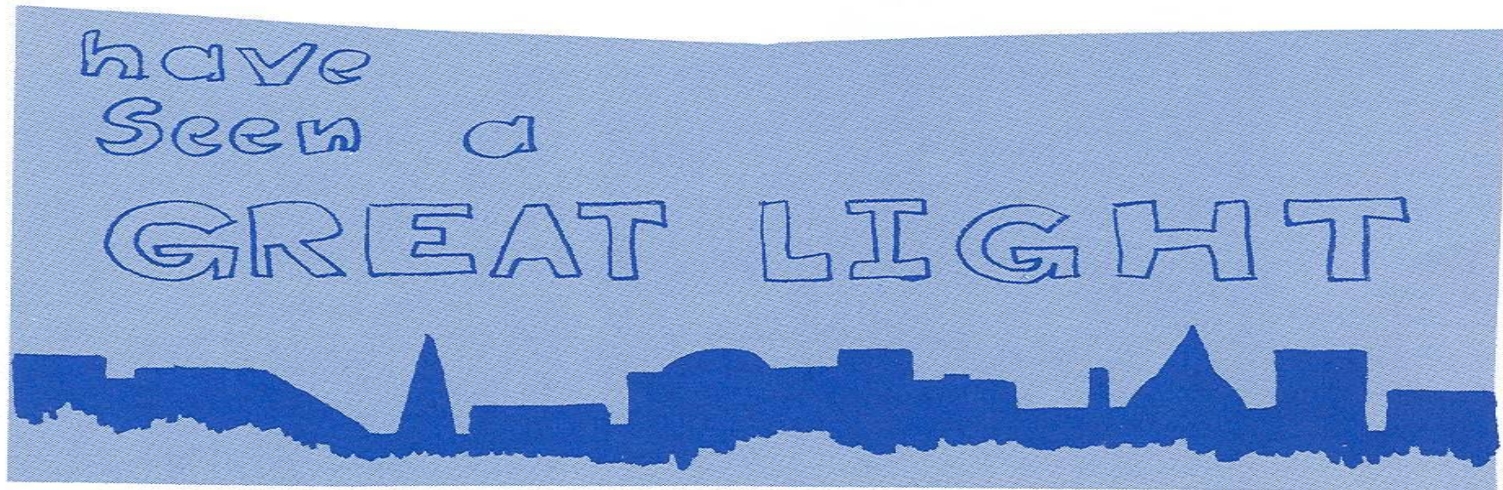
Where should the words go on the paper?
And what colors might they be?



“The people who sat in darkness . . .” that does fit the cover of the card quite well.



And “have seen a great Light” on the inside!



A deep red for the cover words, and gradually brighter letters on the inside. They lead up to a bright foil manger in the heart of dark Bethlehem.



I hope people will like the card; I hope it will speak to them. But I still wonder, maybe it should show that the Light is ours today in New Haven, too! I think we should do the next one with Bethlehem on the outside, a light glowing out somewhere, and on the inside, all the way across, the New Haven skyline, with a smaller Bethlehem skyline against the darker New Haven skyline, and the manger bursting with light for everyone.

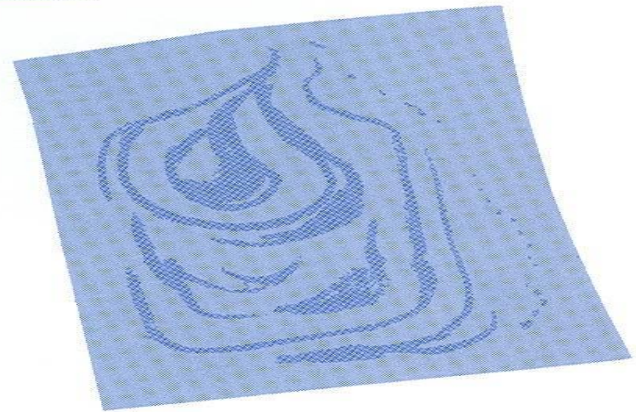


CRAYON-RESIST CARDS

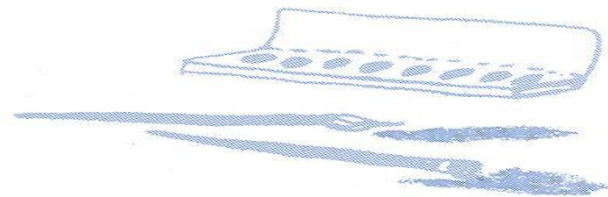
Most families have seen crayon-resist art. Their primary-school children bring it home from school, usually around grade 3 or 4. Most often it is a 9" x 12" size, predominantly black with vividly glowing simple outlines shining through. I have one stapled to my attic study wall. It occurred to me that this would make a lovely, simple way to create family greeting cards. And then Joan, the illustrator of this book, created some designs that proved me more right than I could have imagined!



I learned that the crayon-resist method didn't have to be dominated by black, although black does give strikingly lovely results. Any color may be chosen for dominance. The method itself is simple: with crayon draw on any white paper, except glossy paper, [the kind of paper you choose creates interesting differences in the card]. Use as many colors as you wish, draw as narrowly or as broadly as you wish. When you are done with your basic picture, take any water color and broad-brush across the whole paper.



You will see that the crayon has resisted the watercolor, while the paper has absorbed it! If you have chosen black or another deep dark color, the crayon colors will leap out at you. Their contrasts will stand out boldly. (Of course, crayon the same color as the watercolor will not show up).



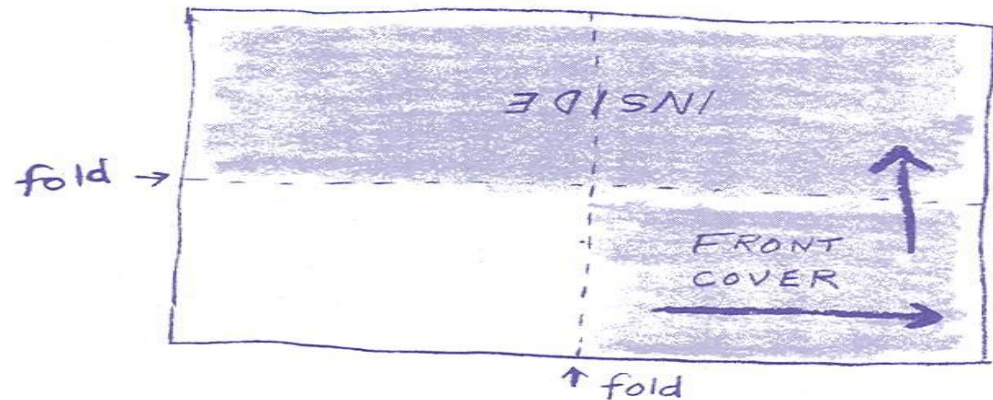
Pentecost is a good time to do cards such as these! I'm not very good at drawing people, but we don't do family crafts to display our abilities. We do them to share Christ's love.



The colors of Pentecost are deep reds and bright oranges, and that's what I think I'll pick for my watercolor wash. That means I'll draw my design with blacks and dark blues and perhaps a rich green, and a frisky yellow.



Of course, this design is done all on one side of the paper, laid out with one-quarter for the cover, and "upside down" the "bottom half" all the way across for the inside. Then, when I have brushed my bright orange and rich reds across the black outlines, brown doors, and white robes, and the water has dried, I'll fold the paper into final card shape.



I like the Pentecost Gospel: Jesus appears to the fear-filled disciples, locked away behind closed doors. He breathes upon them, sending them out as the Father sent Him. He tells them they now can share forgiveness — His forgiveness — with others. I think of not being forgiven as being locked behind closed doors.

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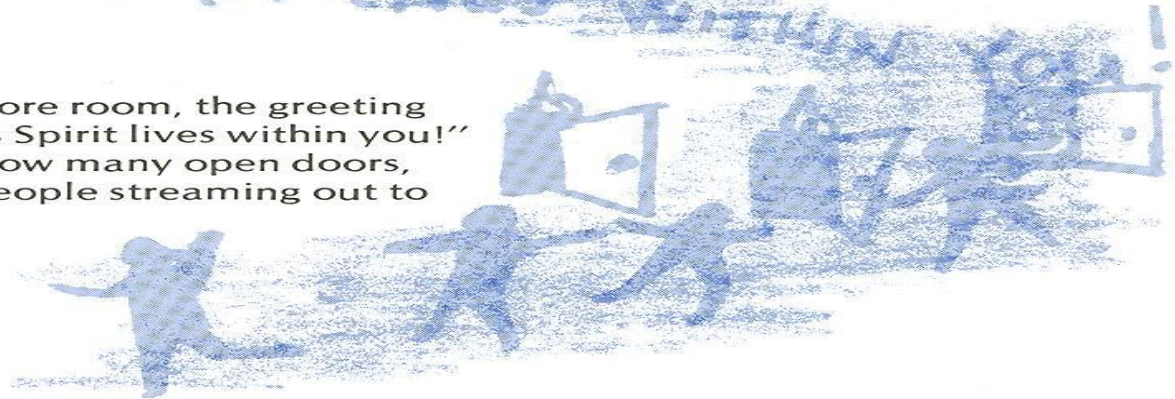
So, I'll begin with Jesus, robed in white, standing within the door, reaching out his hands to the disciples. And this cover picture will say: "OPEN UP!"

OPEN

UP!

CHRIST'S SPIRIT LIVES WITHIN YOU!

Inside, where I have more room, the greeting will continue: "Christ's Spirit lives within you!" And the picture will show many open doors, flame-touched, with people streaming out to life.



THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CRAFT BOOK



SIMPLE CANDLE HOLDERS



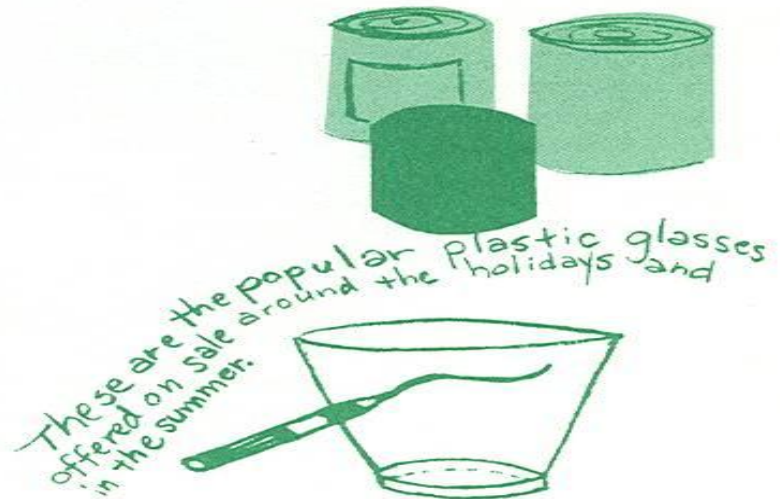
Burton Everist

SIMPLE CANDLE HOLDERS

These two simple candleholders are both made with items that people usually throw away: plastic party glasses and tin cans. I like reusing throwaways, and made a point to do so long before the urgent ecological crisis developed and people began to "recycle" waste. Then, and now, I saw it as simple stewardship and as a reminder of one element of our salvation: rescue and restoration. Rev. Karl Lutze, Director of the Lutheran Human Relations Association and Professor of Religion at Valparaiso University, used to offer the example of pawning and redeeming an old unworking clock: it includes putting the clock back in working condition.

STAINED PLASTIC CANDLE HOLDERS

As I mentioned in the introduction, this recycling craft developed on-the-spot at a youth gathering. I was on the spot because I was responsible, simultaneously, for three major activities: a film festival (late evenings), television "broadcasting" on the hotel TV system (later evenings), and three "Art in the Service of the Gospel" workshops (afternoon and early evenings). There were many details I had to get ready. Although it was well below freezing in our late December New England climate, my tin cans did not have enough time to freeze (see tin can candleholders) and I ran out of the backup plastic milk cartons, which were working out quite well until the last one was used up. Between my second and third workshop's, I accidentally marked (with a felt-tip marker) the side of one of the clear plastic drinking glasses which was provided in every hotel room. Not only did the marking stay on the plastic, it interacted chemically with the plastic, merging with it — much to my amazement!



As C.S. Lewis says, "Accidents don't just happen." Our workshops at Simple Gifts (the title of the conference) were called gift shops, but I thought that I was supposed to be the one doing the giving! Once more I learned the reality our Lord proclaimed: "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap." (Luke 6:38).

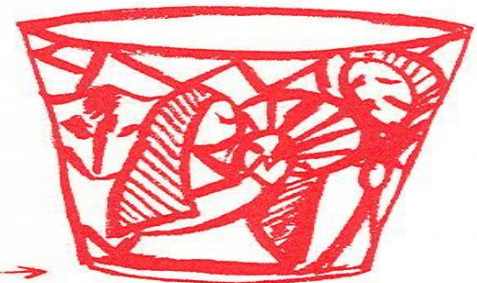
So... HERE'S HOW YOU CAN DO IT!

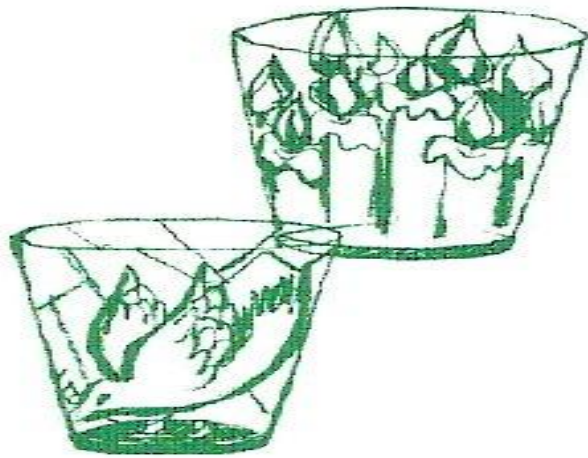


With a set of permanent felt-tip markers (see note for specific brands, not all seem to work the same way), and any of the plastic drinking glasses (see note for suggestions of brands), you can have a lovely container into which you may set a candle held in a small glass container. **YOU MUST USE A GLASS CONTAINER INSIDE THE PLASTIC GLASS, OR YOU MAY CAUSE A VERY HOT FIRE!**

Burn the candle for short periods of time only!

You may wish to draw a design lightly upon the plastic glass with a water-base marker first (the nonpermanent kind of marker), or you may just plunge right in and mark away with your permanent marker. Either way is fine. You may use stained glass windows from church or from a book, or Christmas or other greeting cards for ideas, or you may wish to make up your own, as did Rosemary!





If you are using the stained-glass effect, start with your black outline and fill in with colors later. You might want to practice on the bottom of the plastic glass, you can cover it all over later with black if you wish. You will do your design on the *outside* of the glass. (You can color the inside, too. It will make the colors deeper.)

You will notice that the permanent marker will etch a pattern on the plastic. You may wish to use a set pattern, or simply etch randomly at your whim. (One girl at SIMPLE GIFTS created the effect of a dove's feathers, and a young man added to the feeling of candles on his design

It's as simple as that! You might want a good ventilation while you are doing this craft — some markers have a strong odor.

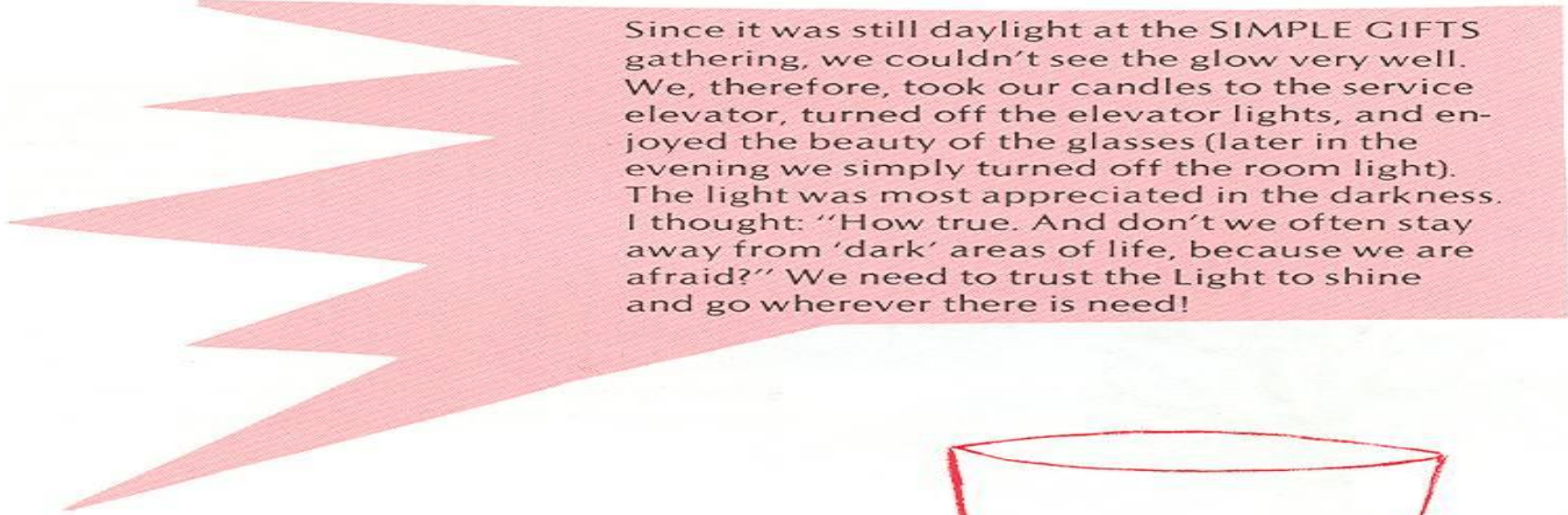
In summary: take permanent felt-tip markers, draw upon the outside of the plastic glasses, and behold the results, immediate and bright!

Set a small glass (clear) into the plastic glass, set a small candle inside it, and carefully light the candle with a long match or a candlelighter. Darken the room, and enjoy the candle's glow.

It reminds me of a child's definition of the saints:
"Saints are the people the light shines through."

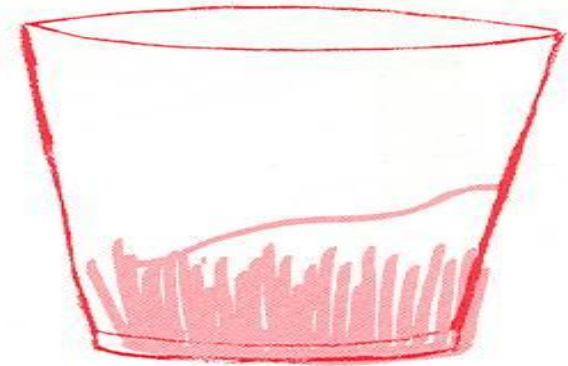
So we are, by the grace of God!






Since it was still daylight at the SIMPLE GIFTS gathering, we couldn't see the glow very well. We, therefore, took our candles to the service elevator, turned off the elevator lights, and enjoyed the beauty of the glasses (later in the evening we simply turned off the room light). The light was most appreciated in the darkness. I thought: "How true. And don't we often stay away from 'dark' areas of life, because we are afraid?" We need to trust the Light to shine and go wherever there is need!

For my candleholder I think I'll do a spring scene, suggesting new life, growth in the joy of God's creation. Green grass along the bottom, with a gentle rolling hill on one side. Straight up and down strokes, laid one upon the other, make good grass.



I'm leaving room for some flower beds, much like the violets that carpet our spring garden. Little purple dots sprinkled all through the grass really brighten it up. And some vivid yellow dots for the jonquils (and dandelions) clustered in little groups.





Along the ridge of one side that same yellow in a close row betokens the lively forsythia hedges that announce springtime in our neighborhood. On the hillside I'm growing a tree or two, a flowering cherry, deep pink in color. At the foot of the tree a sprinkling of colors suggests tulips.

A rich blue sky, spaced with some gracious clouds and highlighted with a yellow/red/golden glowing sun. A few quick dashes with a black pen suggest returning geese on their way home.



And I can't resist a word of joy:
"Hooray for God!"
(That's a literal translation for
"Hallelujah!")

TIN CAN CANDLEHOLDERS

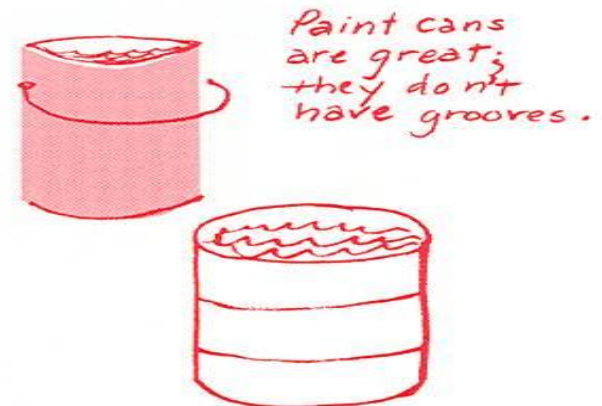


Electric lights are convenient, fairly reliable, and inexpensive. But dull! Yes, they can be dressed up with fancy shades and molded shapes, and even an appearance of motion. But they lack warmth and the surprise of flickering shadows randomly cast by dancing flames. Although reading by candlelight is not desirable, family worship and singing around a candle-lit table can be enriching and memorable. Also, it compels us to depend more upon our memory than upon books, and encourages us to memorize our songs and prayers. Since books can be taken from us (or not be around when we need them), any way in which we are led to learn by heart is worth practicing!

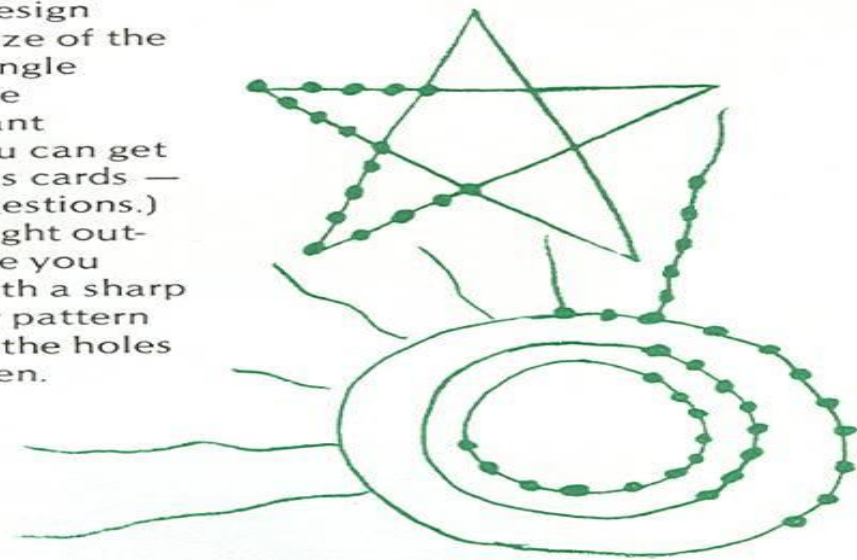
Not only candles, but also candleholders can assist our worship. In this chapter, recycled tin cans become lovely and meaningful candleholders for occasions both inside and outside the house. The Spanish enjoy candlelight processions, and, somewhere in the past, created these tin can candleholders for carrying the candles without danger of their going out in the wind.

Making the holders is simple and requires few tools: a hammer and a variety of nails, nothing more (except water for freezing). You may wish to create your designs ahead of time with pencil and paper, but that *is* an option.

You do need to begin your preparations *ahead* of time — at least two days before you plan to make your holder (not counting your saving of the tin cans). You will pour water nearly to the top of each tin can and set it to freeze (outside in the winter, in a freezer in the summer). Let it freeze for *two* days, or the core of the ice will not remain hard enough for the next step, and will collapse . . . and so will the can.



If you wish to do a pencil-and-paper design ahead of time, cut your paper to the size of the tin can, and lay it out as the flat rectangle it will be. Draw lightly an outline of the shape you want: a star, a cross, a radiant sun . . . any simple outline will do. (You can get ideas from symbol books and Christmas cards — see the bibliography for resource suggestions.) At regularly spaced points along the light outlines draw darker dots of whatever size you like. Punch through these carefully with a sharp nail to make definite holes. Tape your pattern around the tin can, and mark through the holes with the nail or a permanent felt-tip pen.



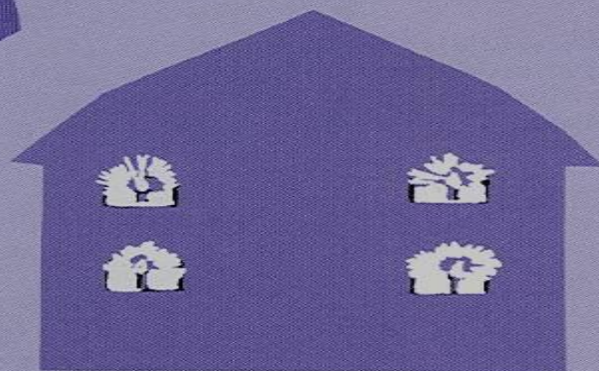
Placing the tin can (still full of ice) on a plastic cloth with a pad of newspaper under the cloth, hammer through the can with whatever size nail you prefer. Sturdy nails work best for this, and a firm, proper stroke with the hammer is the best way. Don't "choke up" on the hammer, but instead, hold the hammer at the bottom of the handle and take a complete swing (rather than "chopping" with it). Pierce through the can until you have the size hole you intended for your design, but don't be too particular if there are variations. They add interest. It is not a good idea to place the holes too close to each other, unless they are very small. For your first work keep your design simple with few holes, and progress to more difficult designs later.



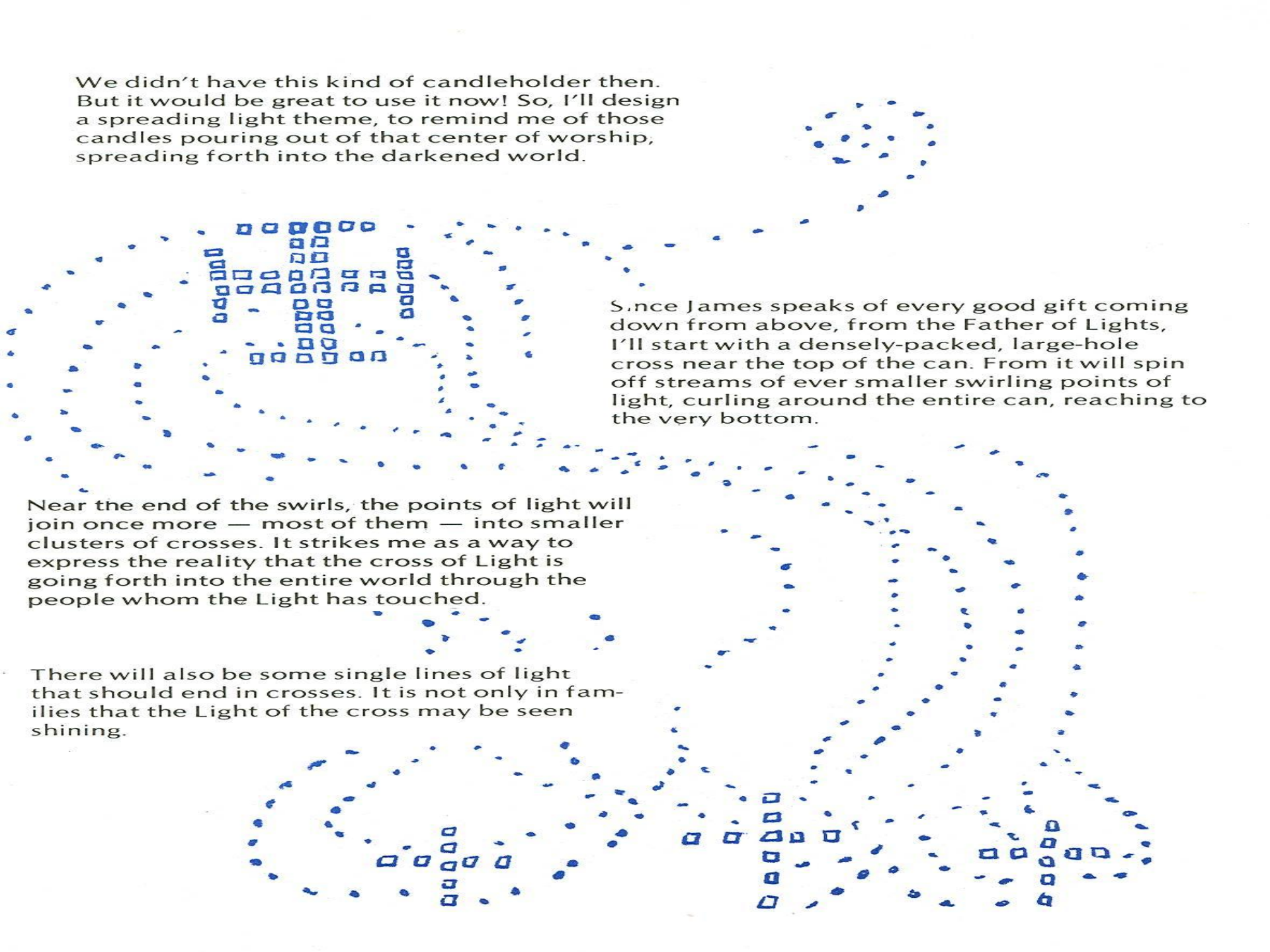
When I was a child in Mason City, Iowa, the church to which I belonged held the familiar candlelighting ceremony each Christmas. But this congregation added one element: each of us was encouraged to keep our candles lit on our way home. It was a memorable way of teaching that Christ, the Light of the world, has made us the bearers of His Light.



We all tried carefully to shield our little candles from the wind.



We didn't have this kind of candleholder then. But it would be great to use it now! So, I'll design a spreading light theme, to remind me of those candles pouring out of that center of worship, spreading forth into the darkened world.



Since James speaks of every good gift coming down from above, from the Father of Lights, I'll start with a densely-packed, large-hole cross near the top of the can. From it will spin off streams of ever smaller swirling points of light, curling around the entire can, reaching to the very bottom.

Near the end of the swirls, the points of light will join once more — most of them — into smaller clusters of crosses. It strikes me as a way to express the reality that the cross of Light is going forth into the entire world through the people whom the Light has touched.

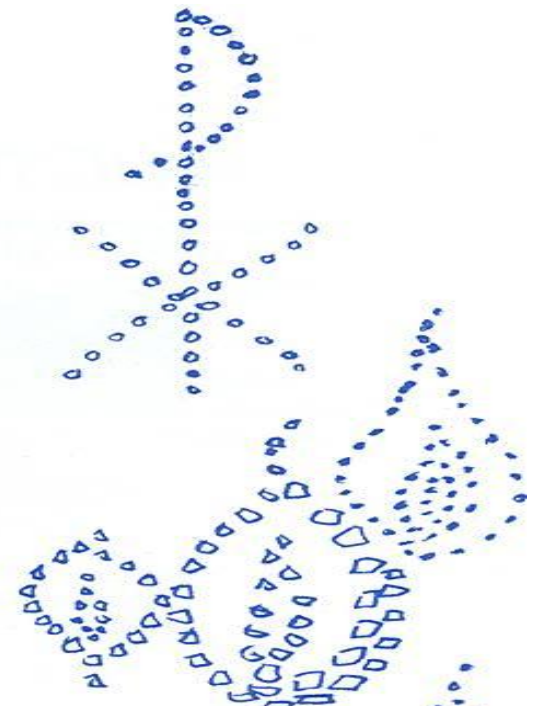
There will also be some single lines of light that should end in crosses. It is not only in families that the Light of the cross may be seen shining.

Some may wonder at the choice of the cross for a Christmas candleholder. In part, I guess I am reacting to the reason given for not showing the film *Jesus of Nazareth* at Christmas time when it was first produced: "People don't want to think about the crucifixion at Christmas."

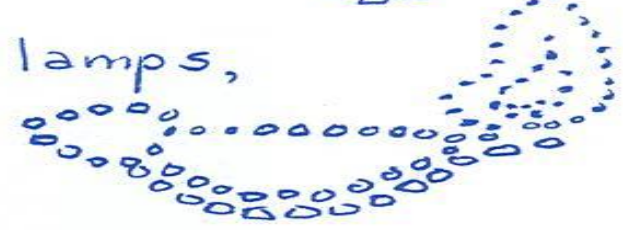
But there is another symbol for me. It is the cross that gives Christmas all its meaning. It is the cross that gives us the ability to see Christ as the Light of the world. The first celebration of Christians was not Christmas, but Easter.

Some other symbols of light:

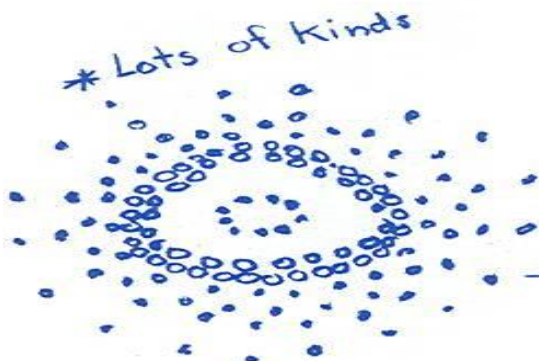
Pentecost flames,



The Virgin's lamps,



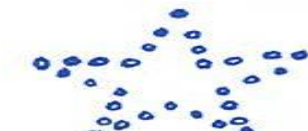
The sun,*



The moon (crescent),



and The stars,



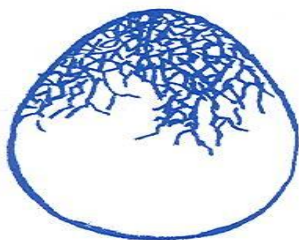
THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CRAFT BOOK



EGGSHELL MOSAICS
PERSONAL ORNAMENTS
AFTERWORDS



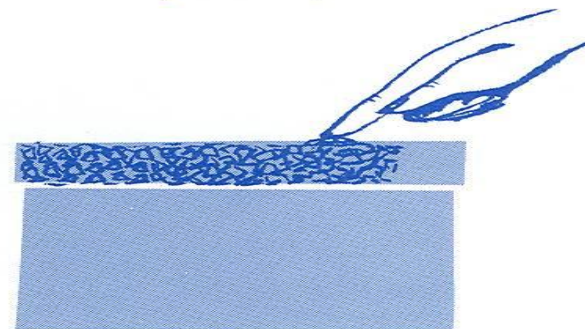
Burton Everist



One last step on your eggshells: remove the light membrane. Peel only what comes off easily, but try to avoid little edges sticking out around the shell pieces. On the other hand, don't be too worried about the membrane, since it will usually be the side glued down to the box. (If you dye the eggs with the transparency pens later, the membrane if it is glued face-up, dyes more deeply. On later projects you may prefer that method for variety.)

① PLAIN EGGSHELLS FIRST...

This first project will be plain eggshells, glued on to any small box. Pour a little white glue into a small, stable container, and brush it onto the inside of any small-sized eggshell fragment. Press the fragment to the box. It will crack further — that's just fine! Continue this until every side of the box (except the bottom!) is covered with your shell pieces. You may wish to lacquer the finished product (fingernail polish works fine). For a large box, use clear acrylic.



If you feel ambitious, you might choose not to lacquer your finished box, but to color a design on the shells, using permanent felt-tip transparency pens (you could use ordinary permanent felt-tip markers, but they will mask the eggshell texture slightly). If you wish to color a design, let the shapes of the shells guide you: don't color half of a piece one color and the other half another color. Let your design be suggested by the "breaks" of the shells.

Now you may want to do more boxes, starting with a design theme in mind. I chose to use undyed white shells with my "picture" already in my head.



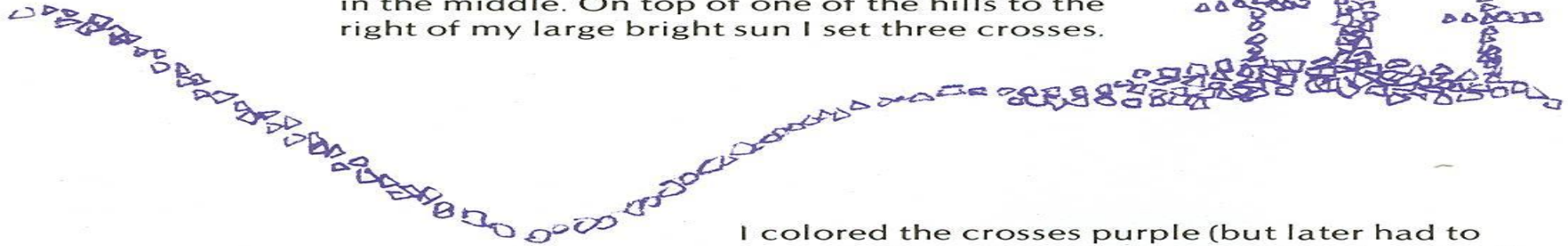
I picked an Easter theme: a bold sun in a bright blue sky above the hills upon which stand three empty crosses.



I began with the sun: basically round, with short, sharp rays of a second color. The shells were applied, glued, and later colored with the pen.

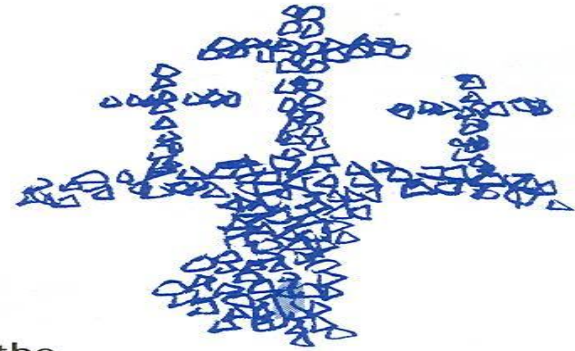


Then I worked on the slope of the hills, fitting slightly curved pieces down one side of the top of the box and then down the other, to meet in the middle. On top of one of the hills to the right of my large bright sun I set three crosses.



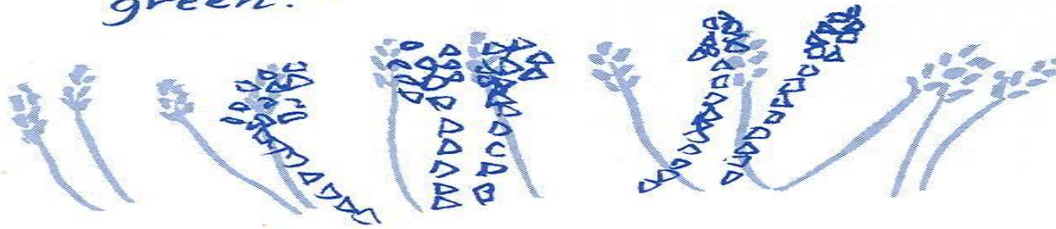
I colored the crosses purple (but later had to remove them, piece by piece with a stencil knife and recolor them bright orange). Then, I filled in the rest of the sky and the earth, coloring the sky deep blue (with some pieces left white for clouds) and the earth a rich brown. Later I covered the rest of the box with shells and decided to continue the blue and brown theme.

The deep blue overwhelmed my purple crosses, and I redid them, dyeing the new shell pieces bright orange! I also decided that one little spot on the hill below the cross should be bright yellow — a glimpse of the open tomb. And, I broke my own "rule", running a thin line of green up a hairline crack on the piece I had dyed yellow. It suggested to me the new life that Christ gave us, the power of the Resurrection to give hope to the drab brown landscape of many lives.



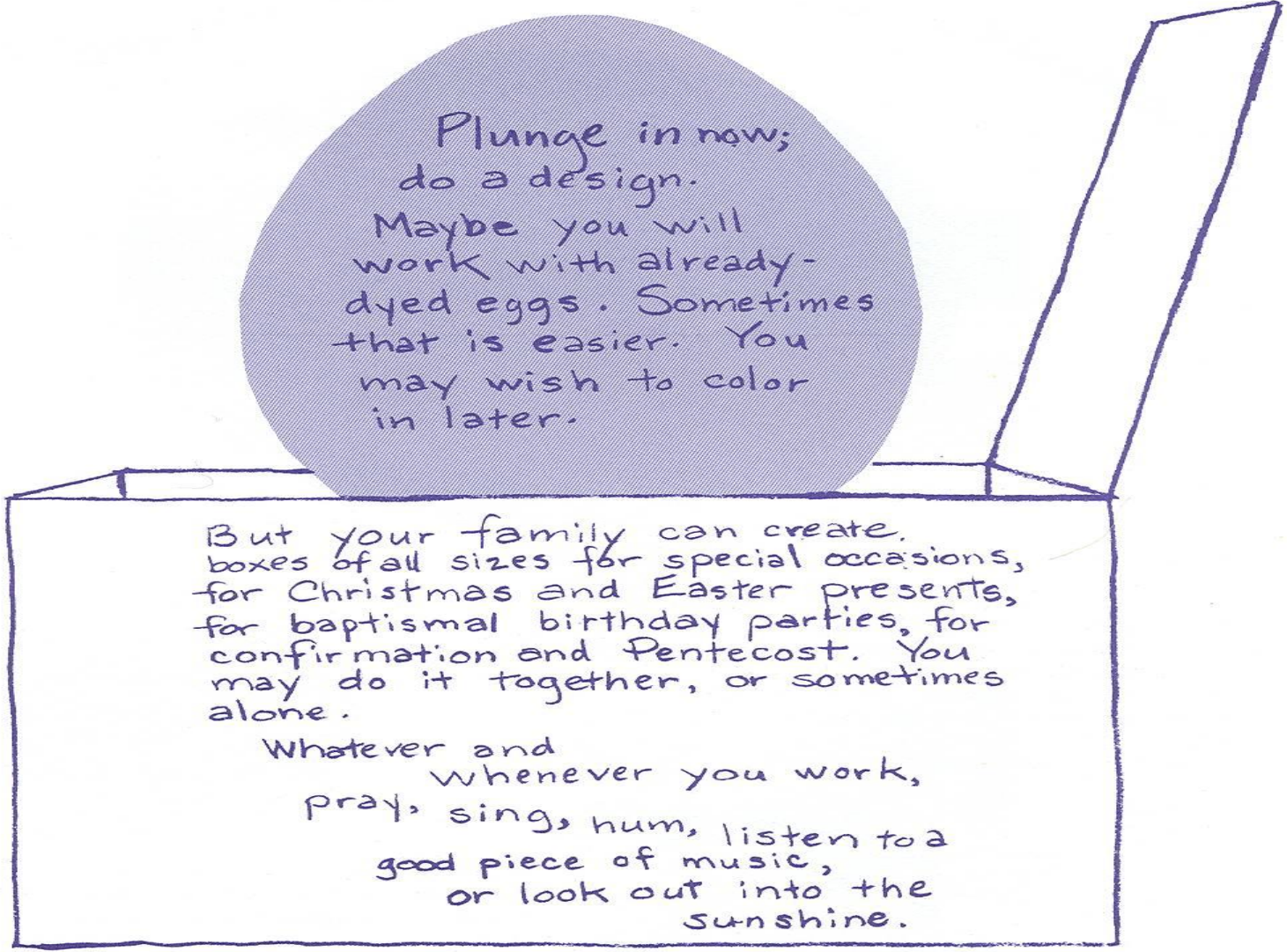
Running through my head while I think of the design: *Love is Come Again*, a splendid Easter Carol from the OXFORD BOOK OF CAROLS:

*"Now the green blade riseth from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again, like wheat that springeth
green."*



Maybe that carol was running in my mind all the while I did the design! It would be a good hymn to sing while working!

Remember, most boxes will be small designs. They are made for desk-tops or devotional centers. My design would be different as a paper mosaic on a larger scale, even with the same theme.



Plunge in now;
do a design.

Maybe you will
work with already-
died eggs. Sometimes
that is easier. You
may wish to color
in later.

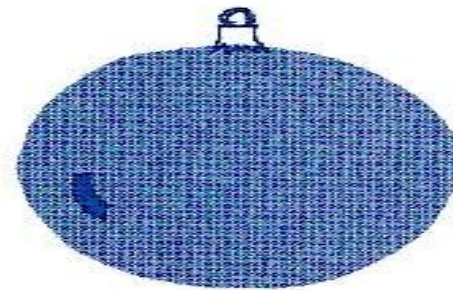
But your family can create
boxes of all sizes for special occasions,
for Christmas and Easter presents,
for baptismal birthday parties, for
confirmation and Pentecost. You
may do it together, or sometimes
alone.

Whatever and
whenever you work,
pray, sing, hum, listen to a
good piece of music,
or look out into the
sunshine.

PERSONALIZED CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS

The heart of the Good News of Jesus Christ is that He came for me. Or, as C. S. Lewis put it in Perelandra, "He came for each one." This simple family craft is another good way of making clear that the gift of Christ is a gift for each person.

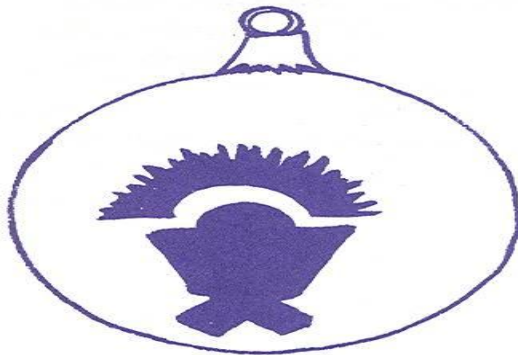
Take one shiny, single-colored, large (two-inch or three-inch) Christmas tree ball, a paint brush, an assortment of acrylic paints (although white is preferred); mix with ideas gained from old Christmas cards or Christmas church bulletins, and just a little imagination and patience; and your family can create personal Christmas tree ornaments for each other and for special folks you know. (It's also a good idea to have some old clean rag).



It takes a little practice, but just begin lettering someone's name on one side of the ornament. (Here is an opportunity to pray for that person as you create for them.) All except the smallest children can work at this, because the work doesn't have to be "professional."

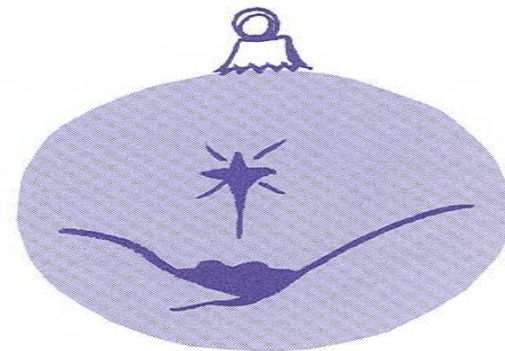
It helps if you *don't* try to do "straight-across" lettering. Borrow from the artists who have fun with jumbled lines that lend a feeling of joyful dance to the work.

(Usually you will need only the first name, unless your family gathers intergenerationally.)



Next, you may want to draw a Christmas symbol on the opposite side of the ornament. Or, if you are really ambitious, you might work your design around the entire ball, encompassing the name. Here, you will want to think of the heart of the Christmas story, and you might well reflect prayerfully on what symbol would be the best one for the person who will receive your gift.

If you don't like your efforts, clean the ornament off with a rag soaked in the appropriate solvent, and begin all over again! But, once more, do not worry over an occasional small smudge or a line that is too long or too short. Begin simply, and do fancier work after you have had some practice.

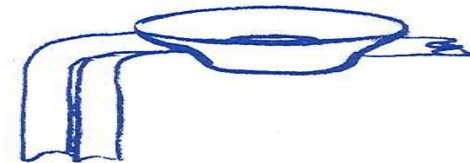


For my ornament, I've chosen a shiny deep blue (my favorite color), and I'm making it for my wife, Norma. Since capital letters are easier to draw, I've danced her name across the entire ornament, with just a little space left so the name does not run into itself! I'm using a light blue paint.



I want Norma to remember (she already knows) that the Lord Jesus has made His home within her, so into the "O" of her name, glistening brightly, I'm sketching a simple manger "x" in white. But the light from the manger is radiating well beyond her "O", spreading out from her name to lighten others.

Norma's ornament could be as simple as that, but there are more gifts I want to share. Norma is a Deaconess, and the symbol of her community is the towel and the basin, images of waitresses and servants. She is also an ordained minister: the cup and the communion plate are good symbols here. All of these also fit the meaning of Christmas.



I think I will underscore her name with the basin, and center a communion cup between the beginning and end of her name. For me, it means that Christ came to be her servant, supporting her in her ministry. It also announces that the beginning and end of her life are wrapped up in sharing her Christmas Lord with others.

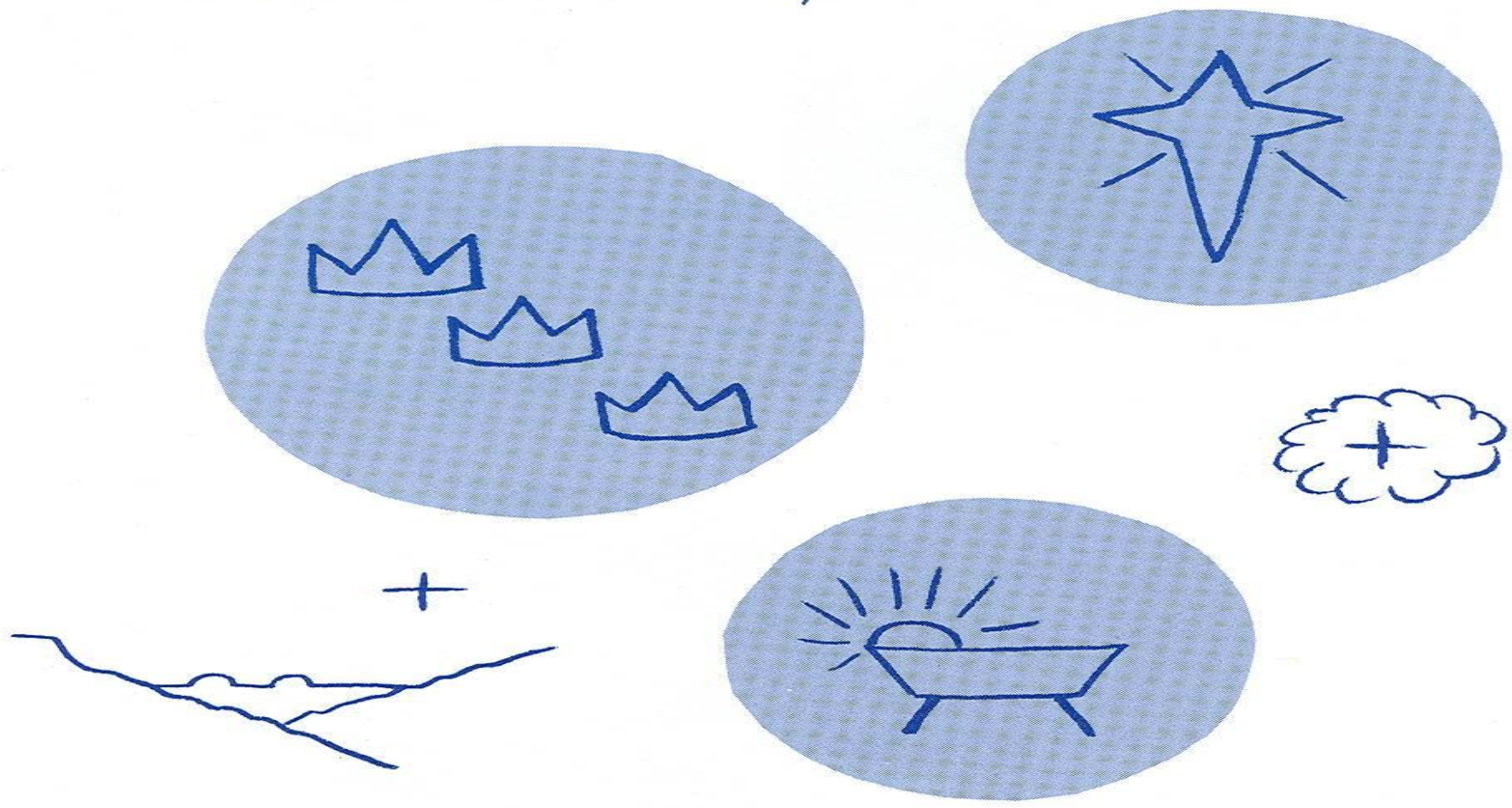


That turned out to be a bit more complicated an ornament than the average, but sometimes it gets that way. Artists might not care to explain the symbols, but for me it is a way of sharing the deepest meanings of Christmas. It is part of the action of family craft: the praying, the thinking, the doing, the giving, the sharing meaning.



Naturally you won't want to limit your creating to family members. There are neighbors, friends, teachers, co-workers, church workers, guests, hosts, and other very special people for whom this craft will be a gift they will treasure, one that will hang on their tree each year, reminding them of you, recalling to them the Christmas Lord.

Some Christmas symbols:

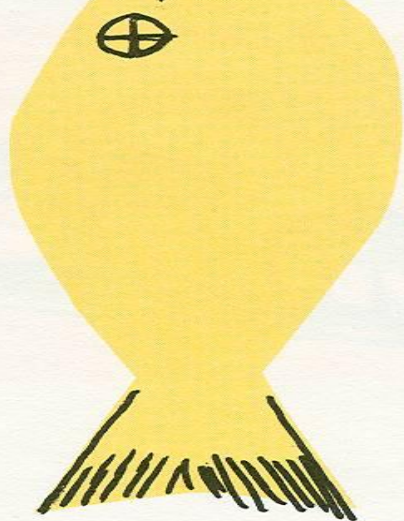


A NOT-SO-FINAL WORD...

Sharing these crafts through this book has been an enjoyable craft for me. I hope that it has been worthwhile for you, too. Our family doesn't do crafts all the time — not even on a regular basis. But when we do, we find the time refreshing. We are pleased with what we create, and we like giving our creations away for others to enjoy.

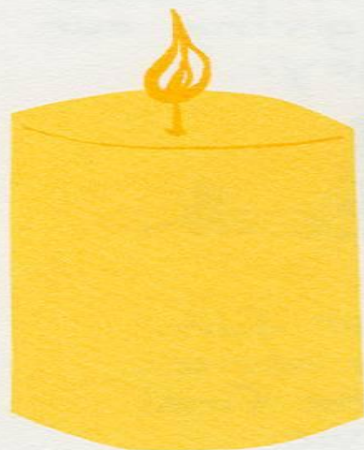
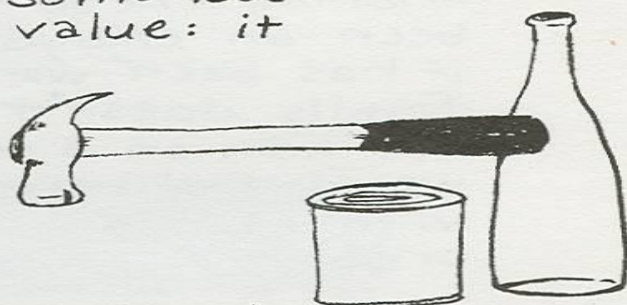


But it is the doing together that is the great fun. We offer suggestions and ask each other for advice. We gently criticize (keeping in mind that the final product is not our major concern), and we mostly encourage each other.



Our conversations share the faith as we seek to visualize it in pictures and symbols. Many questions get asked; some get answered, some are left for prayerful thought. Casual conversation in the relaxed setting of working on a project has a way of opening doors to discuss concerns the family shares.

Of course, it takes time. Even with a portable craft center and all the tools and materials at hand, the doing of the craft takes time. Some crafts take more time, some less. But this time is packed with value: it is worship time, family time, creative time, packed into one.



These crafts are just a few that can be done in families. All of them can be done by anyone, without any Christian intention. Most of them are adapted from ordinary craft books, old art techniques, and contemporary magazine articles. Your family can take any craft or art technique and adapt it for yourself.

I would encourage you to give careful attention to the crafts and art activities your children bring home from school. Let them teach their learning to the rest of the family. Use it to reflect the faith your family holds, and to worship the Lord as you do.



REMEMBER,

if your family develops additional family craft activities, I'd like to know about them. Send me a note, in care of Morehouse Barlow. We might even make it into a second book (with your permission, of course!). And I'm always looking for others ideas to share at the Christian Family Craft workshops that I do around the country.



May the Lord bless your family,
may you grow together in faith and
service through Jesus Christ by the
guidance of the Spirit of the Lord!
~BE

"Let Thy work appear unto Thy
servants, and Thy glory unto their
children.

And let the beauty of
the Lord our GOD be upon us: and establish
Thou the work of our hands upon us;
yea, the work of our hands,
establish Thou it."

- Psalm 90:16-17



