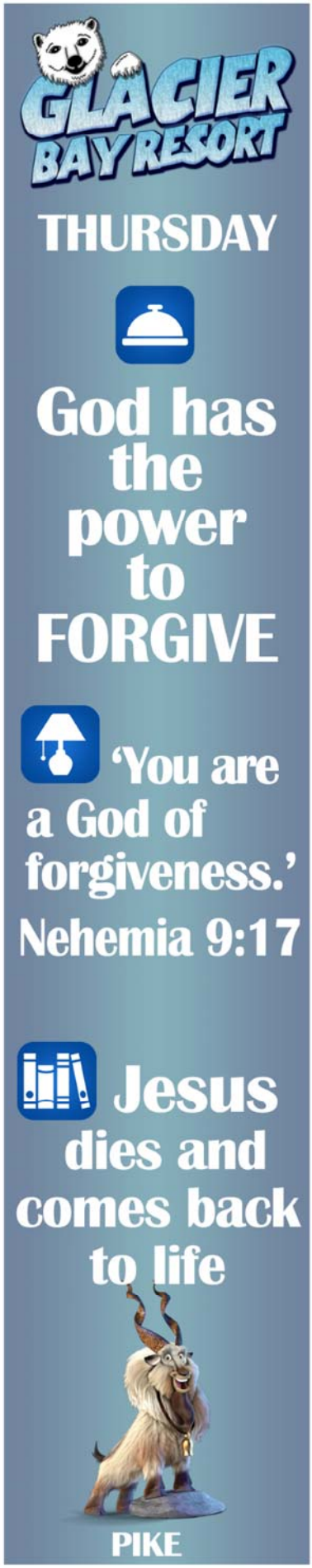
THURSDAY

God has the power to

FORGIVE!

Glacier Bay Resort and Convention Center



"With God, all things

GOD FORGIVES

Did you Know?

The Romans reserved crucifixion—a cruel, painful, and slow way to die—for criminals without Roman citizenship. Usually only slaves, rebels, and the worst political offenders received such a gruesome sentence. This horrible public punishment was meant to deter crime throughout the empire.

After being cruelly beaten, Jesus was forced by guards to carry one of the beams of the cross, a common practice in Bible times. Jesus carried this beam about a third of a mile, and the wood beam could have weighed as much as 125 pounds.

Luke is the only book of the Gospels that tells about Jesus forgiving the thief. Jesus tells the thief, **"I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43)**. The word *paradise* is only used three times in the New Testament. (It's also in 2 Corinthians 12:4 and Revelation 2:7). Some scholars believe the word refers to a place of rest between death and resurrection.

When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain in the inner sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two. This inner space, the Holy of Holies, was the earthly dwelling place of God's presence.

God ordained that only the high priest could go past this curtain once a year. The torn curtain revealed that now, because of Jesus' sacrifice, anyone who puts their faith in Jesus has access to God.

Why it Matters

Jesus lived a perfect life and was wrongly put to death. Everyone who witnessed Jesus' death knew a great injustice had taken place. Jesus didn't deserve to die, but He still forgave the people who crucified Him! Today help kids understand that because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, we have been forgiven for our sins too. Share with kids the wonderful news that there is nothing they can do to make God love them less and nothing they can do that God won't forgive them for when they ask. God is able to forgive us an infinite amount of times—he is the ultimate forgiver!

Pack Your Bags

Look for these items in your daily supply bag:

- Daily poster
- Bible
- Die cut crosses (1per kid)
- Stamp pad (2 per class)
- Peter script (2 copies per class)

Here is what you need to bring from home:

Palm branch, large leaf, or broom
Clothing (sheets, bath robe etc.) to make a "Peter" costume

Here are some things you should do to set up before you begin:

Before the start of today's lesson, make sure you are set up by hanging the large white cross in the room and putting the stamp pad close to the place where Peter can use it.

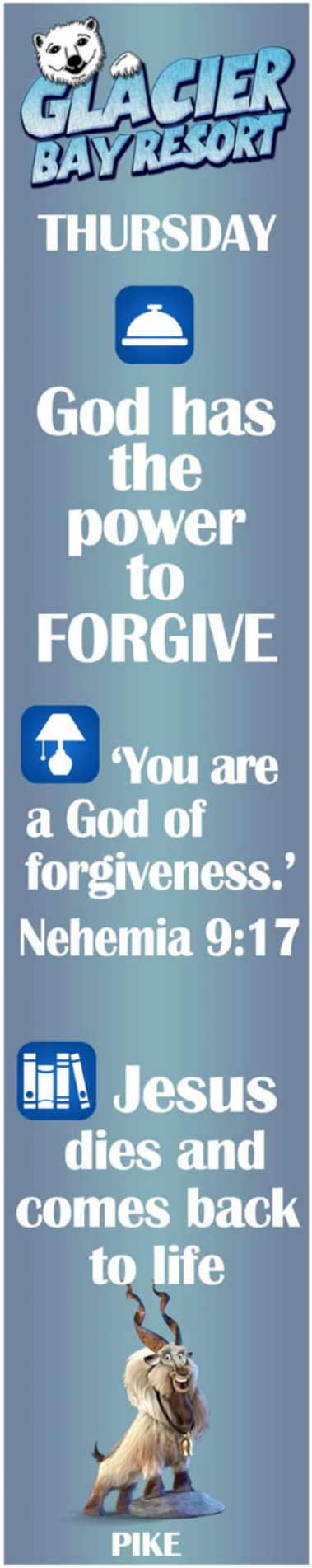
Today guests will be making thumbprint crosses to put in the Mission Week bags for next week. Make sure you have a table or safe place for the crosses to dry.

Ask a Bellhop or your Lodge Assistant to dress-up and play the part of Peter. Make sure that Peter knows that when in the skit it is time for him/her to enter the room.

Check In

*(NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN: Have your Peter get dressed and stand outside of the room where he/she won't be seen by the guests inside. Make sure that Peter knows that when you look out the window and say "*Because we believe in Jesus… well, that's why we're meeting in this secret place…" *that's the que for him/her to enter the room.)*

(When all Guests are in the lodge gather them in a tight huddle. Appear agitated, and keep glancing around and look out the door window. Speak in hushed tones.)



"With God, all things

Today we're learning that God has the power to forgive. Be quiet, please! Listen, I hate to tell you…but I'm not sure it's safe for us to meet here anymore. God sent Jesus to die on the cross to forgive our sins. But now there are Roman guards everywhere looking for followers of Jesus. And that's us! Come on—we've got to be really quiet in the lodge so the guards don't hear us!

I think we'll be safe here. I hope we'll be safe here. But we'll have to speak softly. I guess I need to fill you in on what's been happening. The last Bible adventure you experienced was about Naaman, when God healed him of leprosy. Well, hundreds and hundreds of years have passed since then. God had shown his love by providing for his people and comforting them and healing them. But people still didn't understand how much God loved them! So God decided to show them. God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born and live on earth. When Jesus grew up, he traveled all over, teaching people about God and showing God's love. It was awesome, and lots of people learned about God and believed in Jesus. But not everyone thought it was awesome.

Some people thought Jesus was lying when he said that he was God's Son. They got mad and arrested him.

(Pause.)

They hurt him.

(Pause, and then point to the cross.)

Then they nailed him to a wooden cross—like this one, only much bigger—and that's where he died.

(Lower your voice, and continue.)

Since Jesus was killed, all of his friends went into hiding. They're afraid that Roman soldiers might come and arrest *them*. I know that Jesus is *my* friend. Is anyone *else* here a friend of Jesus?

(*Let kids respond by raising their hands.*)

Look out the window while you are saying the next line.

Because we believe in Jesus…well, that's why we're meeting in this secret place…

Wake Up Call

NOTE: The script for the Peter skit is printed here, and in separate copies available in your supply bag. Use whichever is easiest for you.

(Peter pounds on the door of the room.)

PETER

Let me in! Mark! John! Let me in!

(Bursts in, then looks surprised to see kids in the room.)

Oh, um…I thought my friends were hiding—er, I mean meeting in here.

(Looks closely at children.)

But from your clothes, I can tell you're not from Jerusalem. So maybe I'll be safe here with you.

(Looks around quickly and nervously.)

You, uh, haven't seen any mean-looking Roman guards around here, have you?

LODGE MANAGER

Oh, you must be one of Jesus' followers, too.

PETER

You're friends of Jesus? Yes, I am too! Well, at least, I was.

(Sadly)

My name's Peter. And…I sure blew it. I really let Jesus down.

LODGE MANAGER

What happened, Peter?

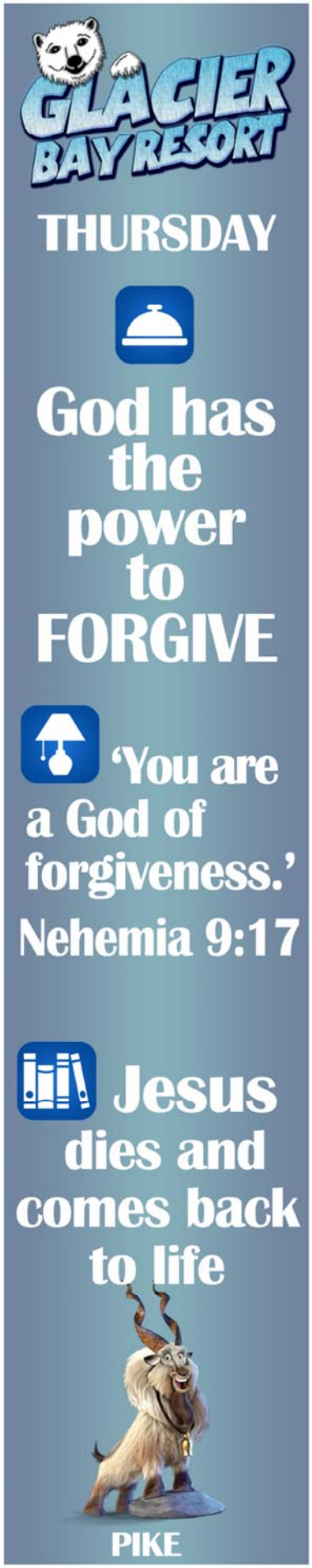
PETER

I've been close friends with Jesus for a long time. He called me to be one of his special followers. We traveled together…

(More animated)

I saw him heal people!

(Goes up to a child and covers his or her eyes.)



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I saw him touch blind people, and they could see!

(Moves hands rapidly into the air. Goes up to a child and covers his or her ears.)

I saw him touch deaf people, and they could hear!

(Moves hands rapidly into the air. Goes up to a child and takes his or her hands.)

I saw him touch paralyzed people, and they could walk!

(Lifts the child to his or her feet.)

They could jump for joy! I <u>know</u> he's God's Son.

(Sadly)

I loved Jesus. He was my best friend. Then, a few nights ago, when we were all having dinner together, Jesus told me that I would tell people that I didn't even know him! Jesus—my closest friend and teacher—looked me in the eyes and said, "Peter, before the rooster crows, you'll say three times…

(Holds up three fingers)

…that you don't even know me."

(Becoming more agitated)

He was my best friend, and he told me I'd chicken out—let him down.

(Asks kids)

How would <u>you</u> feel if your best friend said something like that to you—told you that you would chicken out and say you didn't even know him?

(Listens to a few answers from children.)

Of course I said that wouldn't happen. No way! I would never do that to my friend Jesus

(Drops head sadly.)

But it was true. After they arrested Jesus and took him away, I got scared. I ran away. We <u>all</u> ran away. But I didn't run completely away. I kind of hung back in the distance to see what they would do to Jesus. It was cold, so I went up to where some people had built a fire, kind of like this one.

(Gestures toward the campfire).

This servant girl came over, and she just stood there staring at me.

(Bends and stares intently at kids.)

Then she said, "This man was one of Jesus' followers." But I said, "No. I didn't even know him!"

(Sadly holds up 1 finger.)

Then a little while later, a guy looked at me and said, "You must be one of them!" And I said, "No, man, I'm not!"

(Sadly holds up 2 fingers.)

Then about an hour later, someone else said, "I can tell by your accent that you come from the same area as Jesus. You must know him." And I said…

(Raising voice)

"Man, I don't know what you're talking about. I don't know him!"

(Sadly holds up 3 fingers.)

And just then, the rooster crowed, and across the distance Jesus looked right at me. It had happened just like Jesus said it would. I said three times I didn't even know him.

(Sadly)

Three times. Just like Jesus said. I blew it. I let my very best friend down. I tell you, I turned away and cried like I've never cried before.

LODGE MANAGER

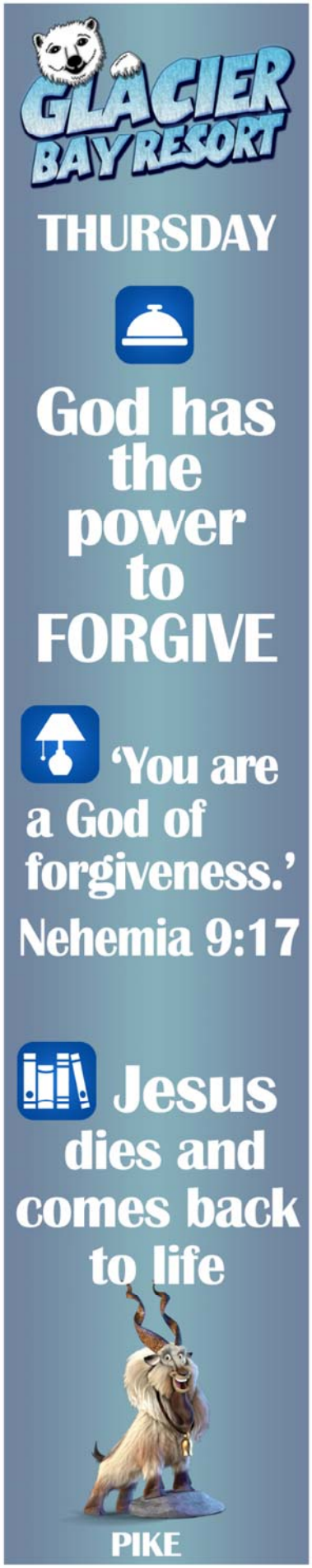
(To guests)

You know, we've been learning that God has the power to forgive. I think Peter needs to know about that. Can you tell him, in your own words, about God's love and forgiveness? What do you think Peter needs to know right now about God? *(Let guests talk to Peter. Encourage them to say things like, "Jesus will forgive you Peter." "God loves you, Peter." "Jesus died for you, Peter. He'll forgive you.")*

PETER

(Miserably)

That's easy for you to say. You didn't do what I did.



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(Looks at the cross.)

It's like when Jesus shed his blood on that cross, it was because of me.

(Dips thumb on paint pad and makes a print on the cross.)

I'm sorry, Jesus. I don't know what to do.

(Hesitates.)

You…you guys stay here.

(Sighs.)

I'll find some other place to hide. I need to be by myself.

(Peter leaves.)

THE END

Check the clock. Time for snack? Do you have enough time to finish?

Poor Peter. When things got tough, he turned away from his best friend. And you know what? We're just like Peter. When we sin, when we do wrong things, it's like we turn our backs on Jesus, too. When Jesus died on the cross, he took the punishment for our sins. For all of the times *we* turn our backs on him. For all of the wrong things we do…the times when we blow it, just like Peter did.

(Pause.)

Think of a wrong thing you've done recently. You won't have to tell anyone here, and Jesus already knows about that wrong thing. Jesus died to take <u>your</u> punishment for that wrong thing. He died for <u>you!</u>

Now I want you to do something special. When it's your turn, come quietly to the cross. Gently put a thumb or finger in a little bit of ink from this ink pad, and place your fingerprint somewhere on the cross. As you do, whisper, "I'm sorry, Jesus." Then go back and sit quietly with your group.

It's okay if a little ink stays on your finger. It can remind you of how Jesus died to forgive your sins. When you get back to your group, just kneel or cover your face, and think about what Jesus was will-

ing to go through for you and that wrong thing you did.

(Quietly invite kids to the cross, one group at a time, so each has a turn. While the different groups go to the cross, have the other groups do the "Emoji Scripture Verse Game." The game parts are in your supply bag. Shuffle the cards and hand each guest in your group a card. Some of them will may more than one. Then, when you say "Go" have them put the daily scripture verse of Nehemiah 9:17 in order. As groups continue with the cross activity, repeat the game as needed.)

(After all of the groups have had a chance to go to the cross…)

God is so powerful. Jesus didn't stay dead. Three days later, he came back to life and appeared to some of his friends. Close your eyes and listen to what the angel at Jesus' empty grave said. This is from **Mark 16:7: "Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died."**

Jesus was alive! And he's alive today! Jesus defeated sin and death and guilt when he died on the cross and came back to life! And he did all that for us—for you and for me. You and I are so much like Peter. We sin. We do wrong things. We let Jesus down, just like Peter did. But when we believe in Jesus and tell him we're sorry, he forgives our sins. Jesus is always going to love you. For the rest of this week—and for the rest of your life! God loves you so much that he sent Jesus, his Son, to die for your
sins. And Jesus came back to life so you can live with him forever. His love goes on and on!

(Then instruct aloud your Assistant Managers and Bell Hops.)

Leaders, you're going to go quietly around each guest circle. Touch each guest on the shoulder or hand, say the guest's name, and then say "Jesus loves you and forgives you" just like this.

(Then demonstrate by touching your Assistant Lodge Manager's shoulder, say their name, and Jesus loves you and forgives you. When everyone has had a turn, go to the door and invite Peter back into the room. As he comes back in, rush over to him.)

Peter! I'm so glad you came back! We've got something important to tell you*!*

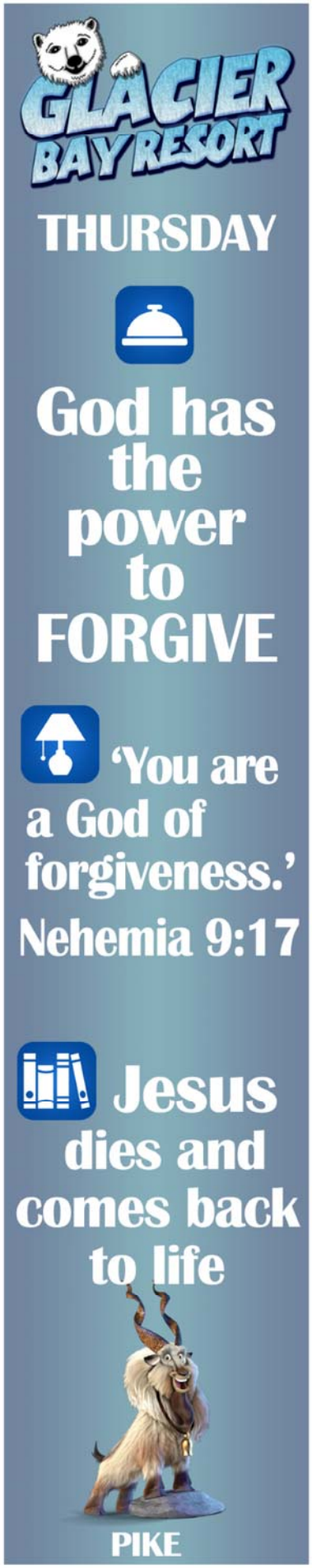
(Put your hands on Peter's shoulders.)

Peter, Jesus loves you and forgives you!

Bible Buddies

(Then turn to the kids and have your helpers hand out today's Bible Buddies.)

Because Jesus died on a cross to forgive our sins, we all have something to celebrate! You can use your Bible Buddies to help others know about Jesus and help spread the good news!



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You know that forgiveness is just part of Jesus' plan of salvation. Does anyone know what the ABC's of Salvation stand for?

(*Give guests a time to answer. Lead the discussion to review the main points described here:)*

A – Admit honestly to God that you have sinned and disobeyed Him. If we admit our sins, He is faithful to forgive our sins and make us clean.

B – Believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again. His blood was shed to pay for your sins. The Bible says: **Because Jesus loves you so much, He took the punishment for you so that you can be forgiven.**

C - Choose to trust Jesus alone for the forgiveness of your sins. When you trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you, God forgives you! You become His child, and He promises you a home in heaven forever!

Helping Kids Follow Jesus

(If you sense that a child might like to know more about what it means to believe in Jesus, you or another adult might want to privately share this simple explanation:)

God loves us so much that he gave his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. Jesus died and came to life again so we could be forgiven for all the wrong things we do. If we ask him, Jesus will come into our lives. He will always be with us and will help us make the right choices. If we believe in Jesus and ask him to forgive us, someday we'll live with him forever in heaven.

(You may want to lead the child in a simple prayer inviting Jesus to be his or her Lord. If you feel uncomfortable about talking to the child, refer him or her to Kris Pakulak, Pastor Ann or Pastor Jeff or another leader who can help the child understand what it means to believe in Jesus. Make sure that you do not share this decision with the group. It is a personal decision that should be shared with the one who has just accepted Jesus into their hearts.)

Turn Down Service

There are many ways that we can share God's love and forgiveness with others. Can you think of some ways we can do that?
(Give guests some time to share their answers.)
How many of you know what Mission Is Possible is at our church? Would anyone like to explain Mission Is Possible?
(Encourage your Bell Hops to share if they are going to be a part of Mission is Possible.)
Today we're going to be making Thumbprint Crosses that will go in each bag for the children that the youth of our church visit next week.
When I call your group, I want you to come up and make your cross. While each group is making their cross I want the other groups to be coloring the note that will be included with the crosses you send. Make sure that you sign your name on the card that you color.
(Have each group come to the table and make fingerprints on the crosses from your supply bags and the ink pads. Make sure that you put the crosses in a safe place where they can dry overnight.)

NOTES