

# Growing Together

## In Touch

**Families 11:**  
God loves us,  
no matter what.

**Bible Story**  
A father welcomes his son  
home (Luke 15:11-32).

**Bible Verse**  
“And may you have the power to  
understand, as all God’s people  
should, how wide, how long, how high,  
and how deep his love is”  
(Ephesians 3:18).

Today the children learned that God loves them, no matter what. They learned from the story of the prodigal son that God is always willing to forgive them when they ask and that nothing can separate them from God’s love.

## Breadstick Hugs

Make these treats with your child. You’ll need one can of refrigerator breadsticks, oil, and Parmesan cheese. Separate the dough into breadsticks. Stretch each breadstick until it’s about 10 inches long. Then twist the breadsticks into pretzel shapes. (You might want to use a pretzel as a pattern as you twist the dough.) Brush the breadsticks with oil, and sprinkle with cheese. Bake according to the directions. When they’re done and still warm, take them to someone who needs to feel loved. Give that person a hug as you share your warm pretzels.

## “God’s Love” Poster

Read Ephesians 3:18-19 with your child. Then have your child think of something that’s very wide (the ocean, for example), something that’s very long (the main road in your town), something that’s very high (a skyscraper), and something that’s very deep (a swimming pool). Have your child draw pictures of those four things. Then make a rebus poster. Have your child print Ephesians 3:18 on poster board, but substitute your child’s pictures for the words *wide*, *long*, *high*, and *deep*. Hang the poster in your child’s room to remind him or her of God’s love.

## Surprise Hearts

Make it a family project at the beginning of the week to cut lots of hearts out of scrap paper or used wrapping paper. Give each family member a pile of at least 20 hearts. Have each person put a distinguishing mark on his or her hearts. For example, Mom might put an M on hers. Throughout the rest of the week, play Surprise Hearts. Have each family member secretly leave hearts for the rest of the family. For instance, you might put a heart in the sugar bowl, in the cereal box, on a pillow, or inside shoes or pockets. Be creative and have fun! At the end of the week, talk about how much your family members love each other and how much fun it was to plan surprises. Also talk about the loving things God does for us that take us by surprise, such as creating a beautiful sunset on a trying day.

## Morning Song

Before bed, read Psalm 90:14 with your child: “Satisfy us each morning with your unfailing love, so we may sing for joy to the end of our lives.” Then learn the following song together. Sing it through several times to the tune of “Frère Jacques.” In the morning, wake your child by singing the song to him or her.

*Are you sleeping, child of God?  
Here’s the sun; rise and shine.  
Stretch your arms to heaven.  
Smile as you remember  
God loves you. God loves you.*