



MODULE 1: WATER STORIES





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Born in Evanston, Illinois.

Powered by Starbucks and San Pellegrino Limonata Sparkling Lemon Beverages.



WELCOME TO AN ILLUSTRATED EARTH: CELEBRATING GOD'S CREATION

Thank you for your purchase of *An Illustrated Earth: Celebrating God's Creation*. We are excited about this new curriculum, and the opportunities it will provide for churches to spend time reflecting on Bible stories that celebrate various aspects of God's creation.

This curriculum is incredibly flexible and has the capacity to be able to be used in a variety of different ways. Here at Illustrated Children's Ministry, we imagine the lessons and coloring pages could be used as a Sunday School curriculum, as a component in your summer Vacation Bible School program, as a mid-week intergenerational program or as a curriculum for a family ministry gathering at your church. In whatever way *An Illustrated Earth: Celebrating God's Creation* meets your ministry needs, we hope it's a blessing to all who encounter it, offering you and those you serve opportunities to connect with each other and with God and reflect on the wonderful diversity and beauty of God's creation.

STRUCTURE OF LESSONS

This is a curriculum that focuses primarily around a particular biblical story for the week, and all of the components of the lessons point back to that biblical story. Our goal is to offer you a low-prep to no-prep curriculum that can easily be led by anyone in your congregation. We don't have a supplies list (other than photocopies if you need to make them and crayons/markers/colored pencils for coloring). In hopes of minimizing your work load, we have intentionally designed *An Illustrated Earth* in such a way that it requires little background material and reading prior to presenting the lesson.

What emerges is a simple but meaningful lesson focused around hearing a biblical story, reflecting on it with open questions and discussion and a chance to create a piece of art based on the story.

Gathering: Since much of the lesson is focused on listening, discussing and coloring, this gathering time gives you a chance to lead an activity that might be more active. We provide you with a sample gathering activity, but you are welcome to come up with your own that suits the children's needs and temperaments in your ministry. Though this doesn't need to be overly involved, it's a good opportunity for movement and for the children to introduce themselves if that is necessary in your context.

Story Time: This is the time set aside for becoming familiar with the biblical story for that week. There are a variety of ways you can introduce the kids to the story. First, we have provided you with a paraphrase of the passage that has been written specifically for children. Second, we provide you with that same paraphrase broken up into a script. If you have some older children in your group, this would be a great opportunity to allow them to stand up and act out the story. Depending on the story, you may choose to have some of the younger children act out the story while it's narrated and directed by the older children or teachers. Finally, we have created Illustrated Story Cards for each lesson. These story cards each have a very simple line drawing that depicts one part of the story. The goal is to offer children the opportunity to put their cards in the proper sequence, matching the illustrations with the story in scripture they've just heard.

Imagining Together: This is not so much a time to make sure they got the information or facts of the story, but rather, an opportunity for the children to share what stood out to them and what they imagined when they listened to the story. Depending on the time you have set aside for this lesson time, you may choose to do this portion while coloring the poster or sheets, or you may want to spend a little time imagining with the children first, and then move over to the poster.

Coloring: If you purchased our Illustrated Earth Coloring Posters, you will have a poster that corresponds with each lesson. Each poster has a word, phrase or portion of the biblical passage incorporated into the design.

Coloring is an opportunity to continue talking about the story, while asking questions and seeing where the conversation takes you. Because many of the story's elements are integrated into the coloring design, it may be fun to encourage the children to search out as many symbols as they can that communicate an aspect of the story.

If you didn't purchase the large coloring posters, you can use this as time for individual coloring with the included coloring sheets. We have provided you with both the design of the poster, and a simplified coloring sheet for your younger children.

Closing Prayer: Whether you simply read the prayer, or have the children repeat after you - use this as a chance to "close" your time together as you wait for parents to come pick up their children. As you approach the end of your time together, this is a great short ritual to do with the children; it creates a sense of community and preparation as they enter back into the world.

Illustrated Earth Sign: Finally, we have included an Illustrated Earth Sign that you can print out (preferably on card stock or a thicker paper) and give to the children in your class on the first Sunday that you teach *An Illustrated Earth*. These signs are for the children and their families to take with them wherever they will be celebrating God's creation. The sign can be personalized, and we encourage children and their families to have fun with this. They can write their own names on the sign, or your church's name (if you want to begin a church-wide campaign). Your church and children will be joining a large online community of folks who have used our *An Illustrated Earth* curriculum: hundreds of families and churches across the world have used this curriculum. We encourage everyone to share their photos on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and be sure to use the hashtag #anillustratedearth. You can check the hashtag online, and see where the global body of Christ is celebrating God's beautiful creation.

An Illustrated Earth: Celebrating God's Creation is a new resource, and the first curriculum that Illustrated Children's Ministry has published. As is the case with all of our products and resources, we would love to hear from you about what was helpful and meaningful and what suggestions or comments you have for us about the materials. We want to create quality resources for children in the church, so we appreciate your comments and feedback.

You can reach us at hello@illustratedchildrensministry.com or find us on the following social networks:

Facebook: facebook.com/illustratedCM

Pinterest: pinterest.com/illustratedCM

Twitter: twitter.com/illustratedCM

Instagram: instagram.com/illustratedCM

We also love to see photos and hear stories about how you are using our materials. When you are posting photos or comments online about *An Illustrated Earth: Celebrating God's Creation*, please be sure to use the hashtag #anillustratedearth, so we can be part of the conversation and you can be part of our online community.

Blessings,

Illustrated Children's Ministry



CALMING OF THE STORM

Week 4: Mark 4:35-41



GATHERING

Since much of the lesson is focused on listening, discussing and coloring, this gathering time gives you a chance to lead an activity that might be more active. We provide you with a sample gathering activity, but you are welcome to come up with your own that suits the children's needs and temperaments in your ministry.

Rain Storm

Tell the children you'll be creating a storm inside the classroom today. Show the children the three actions of rubbing your hands together, snapping, and clapping. Then invite the children to watch what you do with your hands - rubbing your hands together, snapping, or clapping - and to do it with you. Then call out each sound or any combination of the three sounds that the children can choose to make individually within the group, e.g.: "Snapping and clapping!" "Just rubbing our hands together!" "All three!" Listen together to the storm made by their own hands.

Talk with them about a time they've been caught in the rain or in a storm. Then, tell the children there's a story in the Bible about the disciples being in a storm together.

INTRODUCTION

As we witness the incredible qualities of creation, we are reminded of how powerful the Creator is. In this lesson, you will reflect upon the story of Jesus having the authority to calm the storm in which he and his disciples found themselves.

Even when life feels stormy and we're afraid, God's Spirit is with us, calming the chaos and protecting us all the while.



STORY TIME

One of the goals of An Illustrated Earth is to help children become more familiar with some of these stories and to help increase biblical literacy. There are a variety of ways you can introduce the kids to the story. First, we have provided you with a paraphrase of the passage that has been written specifically for children.

Second, we provide you with that same paraphrase broken up into a script. If you have some older children in your group, this would be a great opportunity to allow them to stand up and narrate the story. Depending on the story, you may choose to have some of the younger children act out the story while it's narrated and directed by the older children or teachers.

Finally, we have created Illustrated Story Cards for each lesson. These story cards each have very simple line drawings that depict one part of the story. The goal is to offer children the opportunity to put the cards in the proper sequence, matching the illustrations with the story in scripture they've just heard.

MARK 4:35-41

Late in the day, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's cross the lake to the other side." Jesus had been teaching the crowds from a boat, so the disciples left the crowd and took Jesus just as he was. Other boats came along.

Huge winds arose, and waves crashed against the boat so it nearly sank. But Jesus was asleep on a pillow in the back of the boat! The disciples woke Jesus up, saying, "Teacher, don't you care that we're drowning?"

Jesus got up and ordered the wind and the lake, "Silence! Be still!" The wind and water calmed down.

"Why are you scared? Don't you trust me?" Jesus said.

The disciples were overwhelmed with awe, and said, "Who is this, that even wind and water obey him?!"



IMAGINING TOGETHER

After you've spent some time with the story, we encourage you to reflect with the children about the story and see what stood out to them. This is not so much a time to make sure they received the information or facts of the story, but rather, an opportunity for the children to share what stood out to them and what they imagined when they listened to the story. Depending on the time you have set aside for this lesson, you may choose to do this portion while coloring the poster or sheets, or you may want to spend a little time imagining with the children first, and then move on to the coloring.

We would encourage you to think about what questions make the most sense for your context, and certainly you can add to the list below—but here are a few questions that you could reflect on with the children:

- Water can be beautiful and peaceful yet also dangerous. Describe the scene that Scripture paints. What would it have been like to be a disciple on the boat in the windstorm?
- Why were the disciples afraid? How did Jesus respond to their fears?
- How does Jesus respond when we're afraid?
- How can we depend on God when we feel fearful?



COLORING

If you purchased our Illustrated Earth Coloring Posters, you will have a poster that corresponds with each lesson. Each poster has a word, phrase or portion of the biblical passage incorporated into the design. Coloring is an opportunity to continue talking about the story, while asking questions and seeing where the conversation takes you. Because many of the story's elements are integrated into the coloring design, it may be fun to encourage the children to search out as many symbols as they can that communicate an aspect of the story. If you didn't purchase the posters, we have included 8.5x11 versions of those designs so each child can color their own individual coloring sheet.



CLOSING PRAYER

Whether you simply read the prayer, or have the children repeat after you - use this as a chance to “close” your time together as you wait for parents to come pick up their children. As you approach the end of your time together, this is a great short ritual to do with the children; it creates a sense of community and preparation as they enter back into the world.

Dear God,
Whether you calm the storms in
our lives or give us the courage to
face them, we give you thanks for your
strength, peace, and comfort that
cover our fears.

Amen.

SCRIPT: MARK 4:35-41

Reader 1: Late in the day, Jesus said to his disciples,

Reader 2: "Let's cross the lake to the other side."

Reader 1: Jesus had been teaching the crowds from a boat, so the disciples left the crowd and took Jesus just as he was. Other boats came along. Huge winds arose, and waves crashed against the boat so it nearly sank. But Jesus was asleep on a pillow in the back of the boat! The disciples woke Jesus up, saying,

Reader 2: "Teacher, don't you care that we're drowning?"

Reader 1: Jesus got up and ordered the wind and the lake,

Reader 2: "Silence! Be still!"

Reader 1: The wind and water calmed down.

Reader 2: "Why are you scared? Don't you trust me?" Jesus said.

Reader 1: The disciples were overwhelmed with awe, and said,

Reader 2: "Who is this, that even wind and water obey him?!"

ILLUSTRATED STORY CARDS

On the following pages you will find the Illustrated Story Cards for Mark 4:35-41.

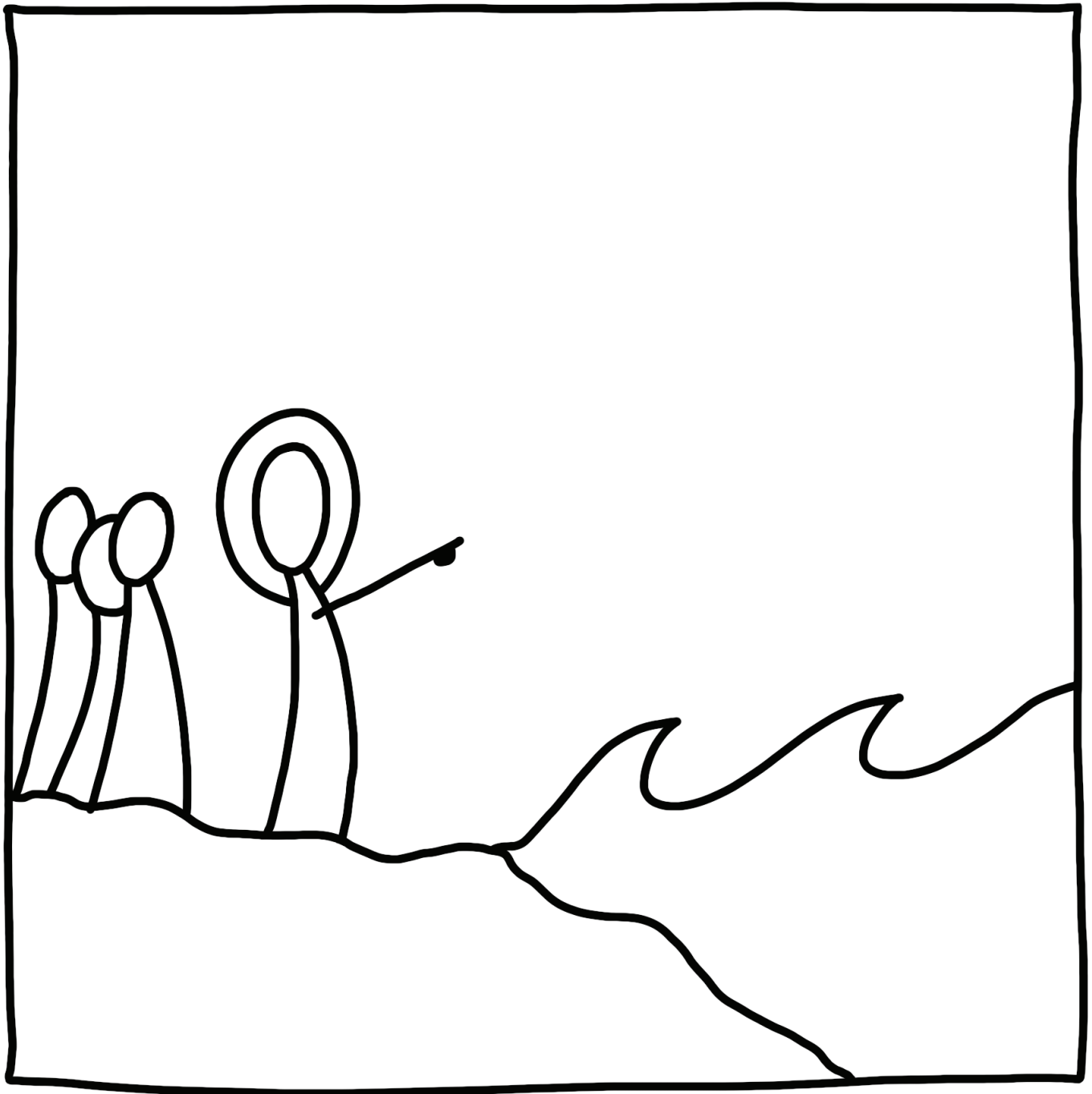
Print out the Illustrated Story Cards and have them ready for children to go through after you've read them the Bible story. You could print out a set for each child, or you could have the children get together in groups to put the story in the right order.

COLORING SHEETS

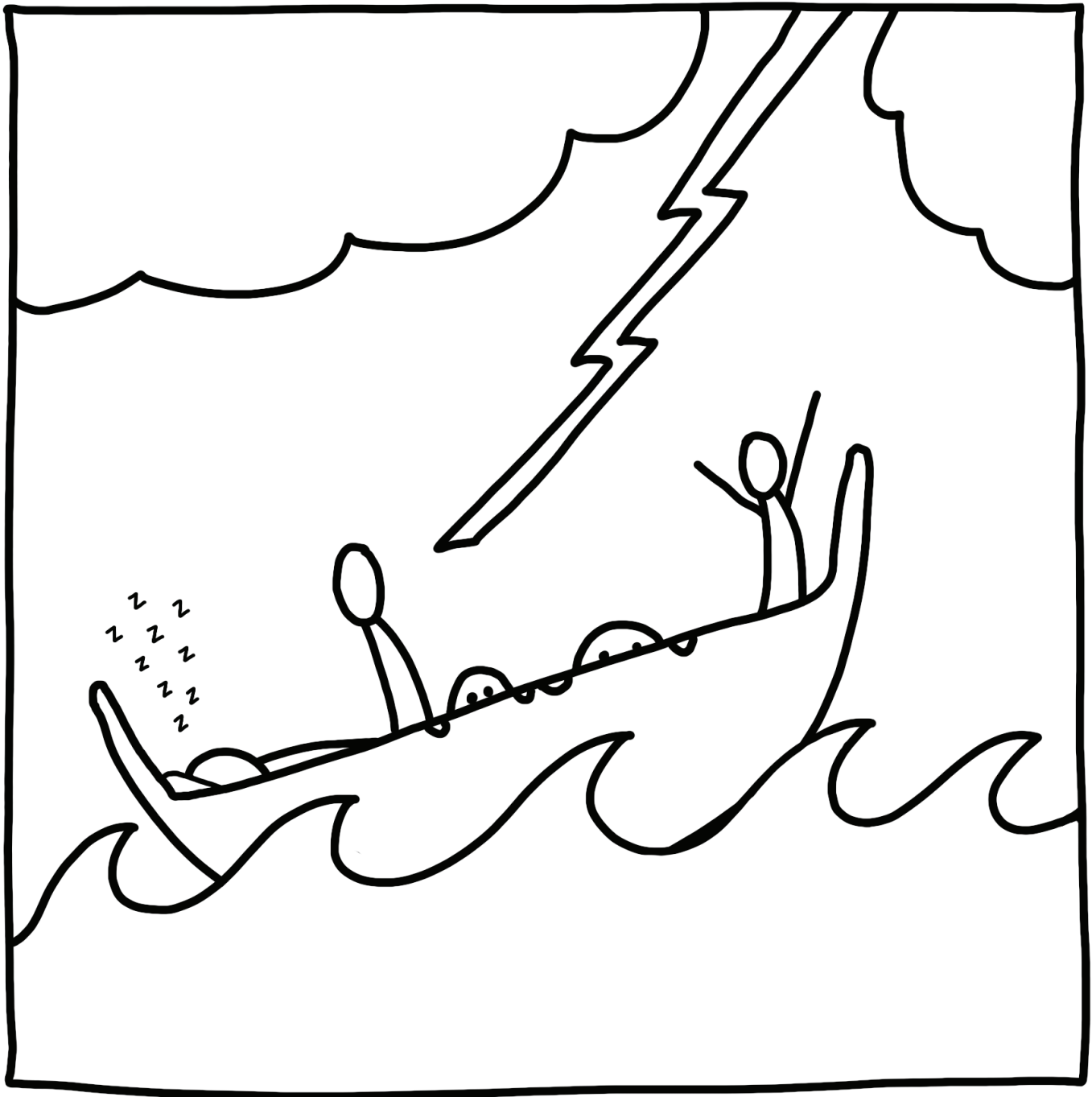
If you didn't purchase our large coloring posters, you can print out these coloring sheets to give to the children in your class. If you did purchase the coloring posters, you could still send kids home with this coloring sheet so they could color one of their own during the week after they've participated in this lesson of An Illustrated Earth. Or you may have parents asking if they could have a copy as well, so it wouldn't hurt to print out a few extras.

You will also notice that there are two versions of the coloring sheet. There is a detailed version which is the exact same design as the coloring posters, and then there is a simplified coloring sheet that includes the same general pieces of the illustration, but with less detail to color in. The simplified version of the coloring sheets would be great for the younger children you may be working with.

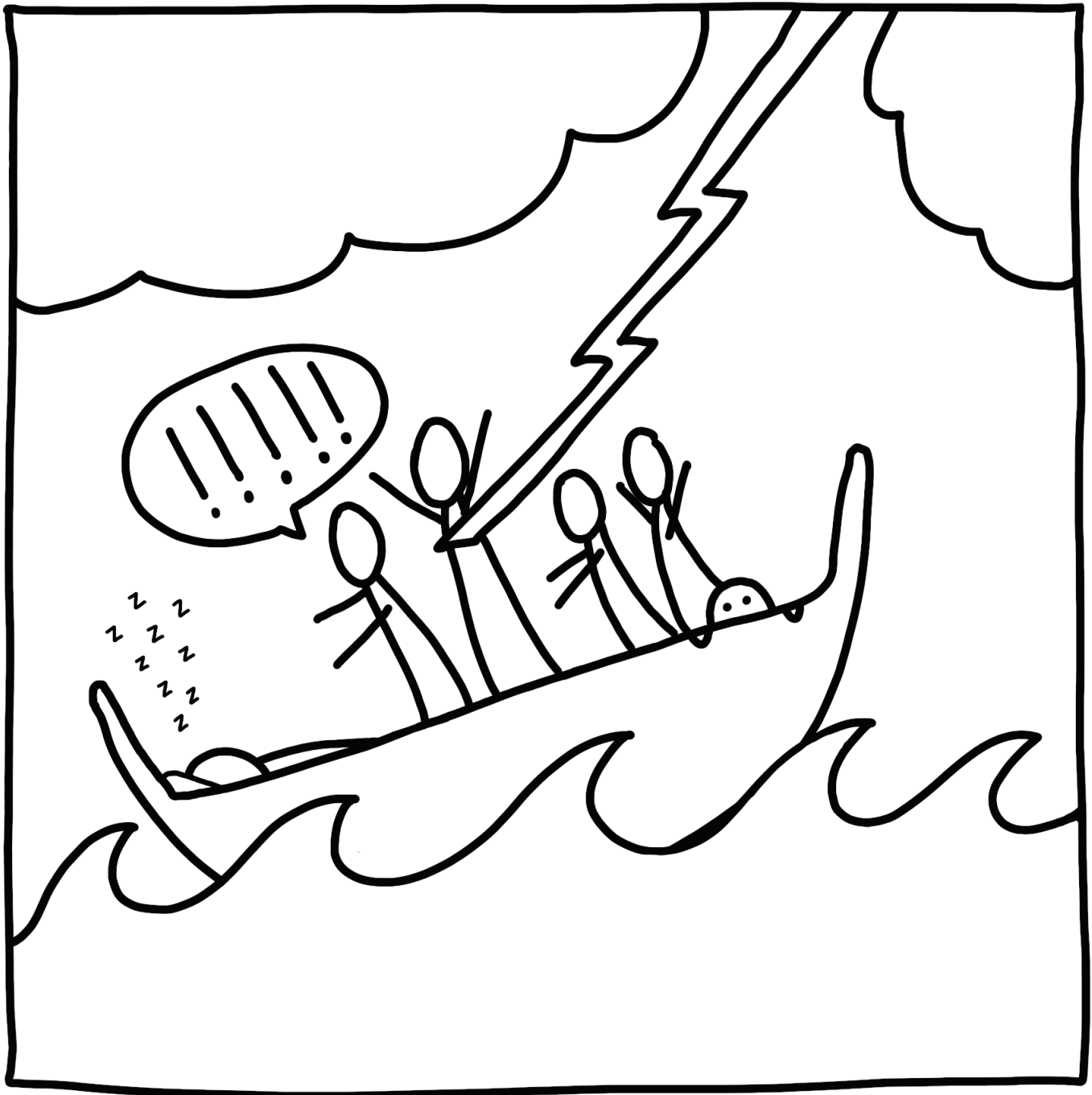
Happy coloring!



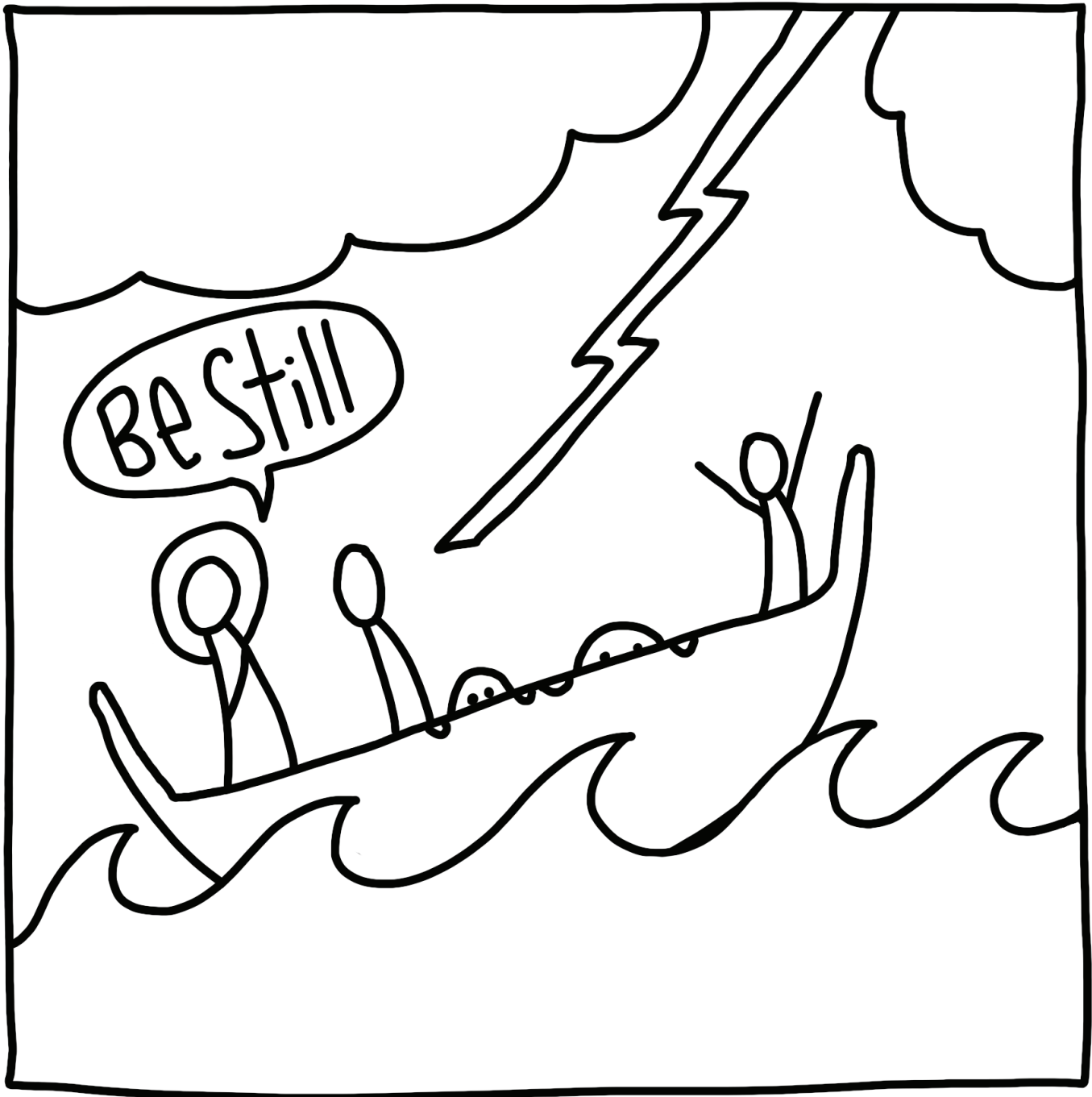
JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES, "LET'S CROSS THE LAKE."



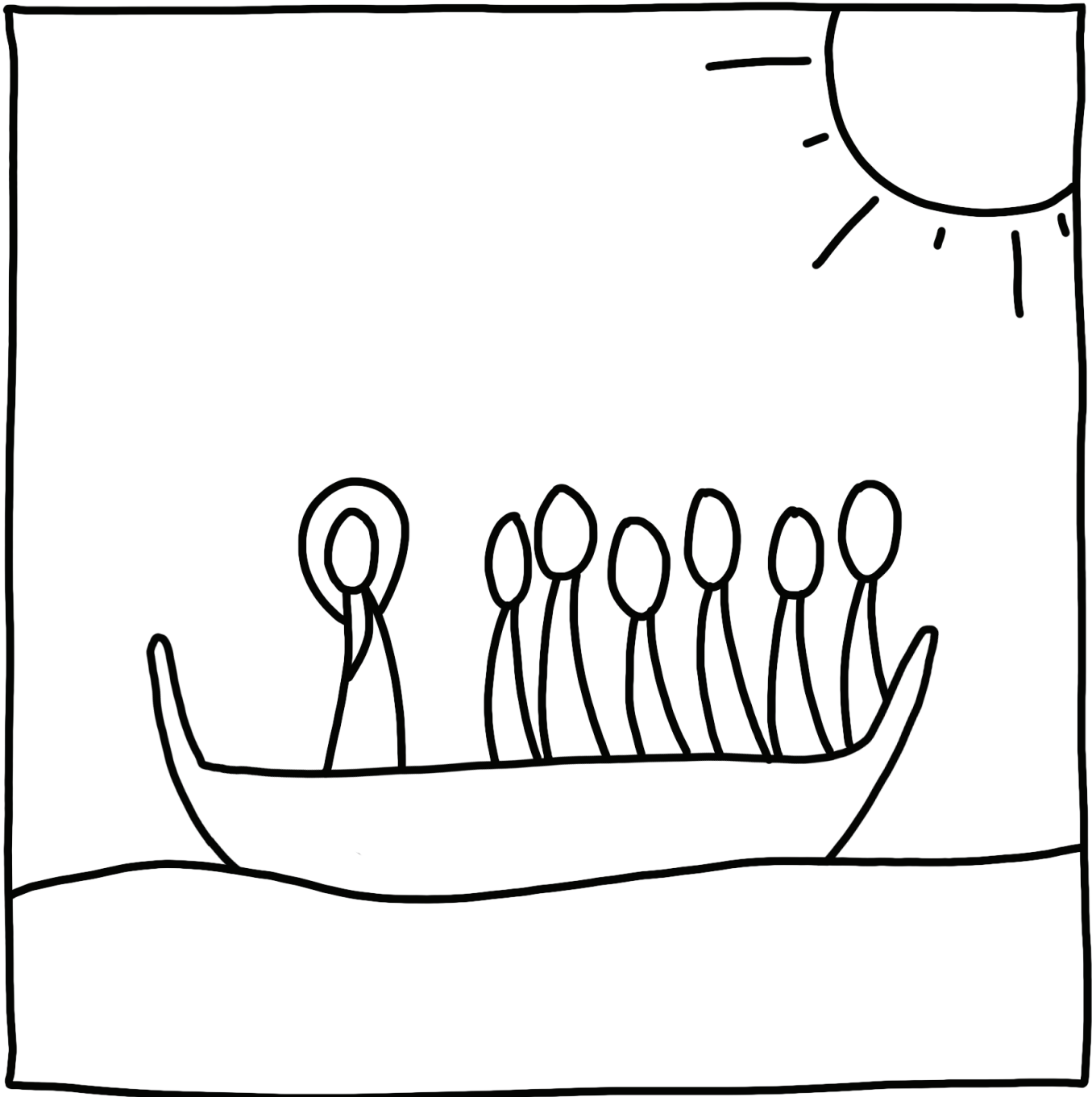
A HUGE STORM AROSE, BUT JESUS STAYED ASLEEP IN THE BACK
OF THE BOAT.



THE DISCIPLES WERE SCARED AND TOLD JESUS TO DO
SOMETHING.



JESUS ORDERED THE WIND AND WATER TO, "BE STILL!"



THE DISCIPLES WERE AMAZED.





ILLUSTRATED EARTH SIGN

The Illustrated Earth Sign is on the following page, and you can print it out (preferably on card stock or a thicker paper) and give to the children in your class on the first Sunday that you teach *An Illustrated Earth*.

These signs are for the children and their families to take with them wherever they will be celebrating God's creation while you are using the *Illustrated Earth* curriculum. The sign can be personalized, and we encourage children and their families to have fun with this. They can write their own names on the sign, or your church's name (if you want to begin a church-wide campaign).

We picture kids taking their Illustrated Earth Sign on family trips, to camp with them, on hikes, while traveling abroad, on mission trips, on long car trips to see their grandparents, etc. You get the idea. We already know that many churches and communities around the world have used our curriculum, and we are so excited to see where your Illustrated Earth signs travel.

Your church could even run a contest for the most unique place that the Illustrated Earth Sign shows up.

Or maybe you want to highlight this as a fun project that children, families, and your entire congregation can participate in. Create a special Illustrated Earth bulletin board and have people post their photos throughout the year.

We encourage everyone to share their photos on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and be sure to use the hashtag #anillustratedearth. You can check the hashtag online and see where the global body of Christ has celebrated God's beautiful creation.





ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alissa Ellett has worked in ministry for fifteen years, serving in churches across California. She earned her Masters in Christian Education from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and is currently serving as Children's and Youth Director at University Presbyterian Church in Fresno, California, where she lives with her husband, James, and daughter, June. What gets her going? Live music, spicy Thai food, Earl Grey cream tea, travel, and creating beauty and depth no matter the medium, especially if it elicits one uncovering their place in God's ecology.

Arianne Braithwaite Lehn is a mother, one half of a clergy couple, writer, and ordained minister with the PC(USA). As a South Dakota native, Arianne originally planned on Law School until God called her to Taiwan where everything changed. She later graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary (Chicago). She now lives with her husband, Jeff (the other clergy couple half) and their one-year-old daughter in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Arianne loves creating things—on the page, in the kitchen, out in nature, and in relationships. She blogs [here](#).

Erika Marksbury is Senior Pastor of the creative, welcoming First Baptist Church of McMinnville, Oregon, and mom to two exhausting, inspiring boys. She's been shaped by growing up in the Midwest, participating in a racial justice project in the South, attending seminary in the Northeast, and studying in Kenya. She coordinates [Practicing Families](#), a blog where parents share hilarious/poignant/cringe-worthy/helpful stories of what it's like to explore faith with kids.

ABOUT THE EDITOR & ILLUSTRATOR

Adam Walker Cleaveland is an artist, pastor, pastor's spouse and father to a hilarious 4.5 year old boy. Adam graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Youth Ministry, and has served churches in Idaho, California, Oregon and Illinois. After doing youth ministry for over 15 years, Adam founded Illustrated Children's Ministry, and is thrilled with the impact it's made in churches around the world this past year. Visit [Illustrated Children's Ministry](#) to learn more about this growing ministry, and you can find more information out about Adam at adamwc.com.