

## BUC COFFEE & CHAT



Welcome friends. This edition of our newsletter will focus on the beginning with the story of creation- and new beginnings. Pour yourself a cup of coffee and let's chat.

### *Seasons Change, But God Remains*

Right now, in the midst of lockdowns due to COVID-19, we are being constantly reminded that there is a season and time for everything. Life is constantly evolving and changing. The norm of daily life as we know it today will gradually shift and eventually look completely different. Throughout our lives, we will experience many seasons of change that we cannot control.

We experience seasons of trials, of joy, of sadness, of mourning, of laughter, of things, endings, and new beginnings. During these seasons it can be hard to remain faithful.

No human work is eternal, and our activities, whether building up or tearing down, change with every season. We all experience change and transition in our lives. Sometimes life is exciting, sometimes it is dull. There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the sun.

There can be so much beauty in change and even in letting things go. Even if an incredible moment ends and fades to a memory, God remains the same. And he promises that there will be more incredible moments ahead.

True beauty is found when we live in the present. The past has gone and the future is never guaranteed. All we have is now. Be present and intentional with your life. There is beauty in every season.

Hebrews 13:8: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Lamentations 3:22-23: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Posted on 09/09/2020 by Haley Cooper,  
[www.myonecomfort.com](http://www.myonecomfort.com)

## PRAYER FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you be confident knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing,  
dance, praise and love.

## A REFLECTION ON NEW BEGINNINGS

Excerpts from a Prayer by the Sisters of Mercy Mid-Atlantic Community

A new year stands on my doorstep ready to enter my life's journey.

something in me welcomes this visitor:

the swiftness of the coming

the boldness of the entrance

the challenge of a year's good-bye.

something in me fears this visitor:

the unnamed events of future days

the wisdom needed to walk love well

the demands of giving away and growing

Joyce Rupp, *Fresh Bread*

### Looking Back with Gratitude

Each time another January greets us, we have an opportunity to pause, to see where we have been, to notice how far we have come, and to ponder how this time has been for us.

We can gain wisdom by looking at the places our hearts have been during this past year. As we look back, it is helpful to identify those that blessed and affirmed us, that challenged and tested us. Sit with God and recall to mind those persons and experiences of this past year. Ponder with gratitude how God has blessed you and supported you in the midst of all that has unfolded in your life.

### Pause for reflection.

### Response: Magnificat of Gratitude

Count them, my spirit, and be grateful,  
Count the wonders one by one,  
each drop of rain, each kiss,

each kindly word, each rose and garlic bud.

Observe them all, my soul, and give thanks.

How many times have you been redeemed?

How many breezes blew clouds away?

How many seeds burst into life?

Holy is God, alive and active...

For all your universal wonders, we praise you.

For all your showering benefits, we thank you.

For all your daily miracles, we murmur gratitude.

Generation after generation you continue blessing.

You are the rock we grasp and hold.

You are the shield we lift for protection.

Age upon age you remain steadfast.

At all times and seasons,

in all places and persons,

we see and hear and feel

the goodness of your presence...

To you we lift our hearts and voices  
in this prayer of gratitude." Amen.

Ann Johnson, *Miriam of Nazareth*

### Looking Ahead to New Beginnings

This is the candle of the future.

We light this candle because we believe in  
the past and in the present.

Because we have touched these times,

we know that there is energy that goes on ahead of us.  
Because there is tangibility,  
because we have marked these times,  
We have hope in the future.  
We entrust the future to God.  
As we begin this new year, let us ponder our call to Mercy through this quote from Pope Francis:  
“...something unusual happened to me. I cannot say what, But it was something that changed my life.  
I would say it was as though I had been changed while my guard was down. It was the surprise, the amazement of  
An encounter for which I realized I had been waiting.  
This is the religious experience: the amazement of meeting someone who is expecting you. From that moment on, God became for me the One who goes ahead of you.  
You are seeking Him, and he seeks you first. You want to meet Him but he comes to meet you first.”

**Pause for Reflection:**

How is the call to Mercy that I experience(d) an invitation that is continually extended to me? To what is God calling us as Mercy today?

God will never let you want for means to do His work. Put your whole confidence in

God. God can bend and change, form and reform any of his creatures to fit them for the purpose he designs.

What decisions will we have made that feel like “good news?” What creativity and hope, compassion and courage, will impel us? What imagination do I bring to the vision? How will our legacy of union and charity empower us?

A new year stands on my doorstep ready to enter my life’s journey.  
something in me welcomes this visitor: the swiftness of the coming  
the boldness of the entrance, the challenge of a year’s good-bye.  
something in me fears this visitor:  
the unnamed events of future days  
the wisdom needed to walk love well  
the demands of giving away and growing

A new year stands on my doorstep.  
with fragile caution I move  
to open the door for its entrance.  
my heart leaps with surprise,  
joy jumps in my eyes,  
for there beside this brand-new year  
stands my God with outstretched hand!  
God smiles and gently asks of me:  
can we walk this year together?  
and I, so overwhelmed with goodness,  
can barely whisper my reply: welcome in!



With the theme of new beginnings, I thought it would be fun to share some of my new favorites- recipes, creative projects, and other things that inspire me to take a leap and try something new. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have! -Angela

## NEW RECIPES

### CHILI STUFFED SWEET POTATO

If you're craving carbs, try this easy sweet potato recipe courtesy of [www.loveyourlunch.com](http://www.loveyourlunch.com) that also allows you to indulge in one of the ultimate comfort foods... chili! Swap in your favorite ingredients and top it all off with Cheddar and sour cream.

PREP TIME 10 min TOTAL TIME 10 min SERVES 1

#### INGREDIENTS

1 medium sweet potato  
½ cup leftover chili  
¼ cup shaved Cheddar  
Guacamole, optional  
Sour cream, optional  
Hot sauce, optional

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 425°F.
2. Scrub your sweet potato and pierce the skin a few times with a fork. Place the sweet potato on a baking sheet and bake for 40 – 45 minutes, or until it is easily pierced with a fork.
3. Remove potatoes from the oven, allow to cool a few minutes then slice down the middle and wrap in foil to be packed.
4. Warm chili and place in a thermos. Pack shaved cheddar in a small airtight container.

“Being creative can involve cooking a meal from scratch,  
creating a novel marketing campaign,  
making up a bedtime story for your child,  
finding ways to cut costs,  
or even developing a creative solution to a negotiation impasse.  
Whatever you do, creativity helps you do it better.”

–Marelisa Fabrega,  
[www.daringtolivefully.com](http://www.daringtolivefully.com)

# Healthy Chicken Fajita Stuffed Peppers

• PREP TIME 45 min

TOTAL TIME 45 min

SERVES 4

## INGREDIENTS

12 oz boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-size pieces  
2 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp ground cumin  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
2 Tbsp canola oil  
1 large white onion, thinly sliced  
2 cups cooked brown or white rice  
1 cup shredded Mexican blend cheese  
Juice of 1 large lime  
4 medium bell peppers, halved through the stem and seeds removed (any color or mix and match)  
A handful fresh cilantro leaves with tender stems  
2 Tbsp sour cream  
½ cup guacamole, optional  
½ cup pico de gallo, optional

Get all the zesty flavors of sizzling fajitas in a healthy stuffed pepper that's easy enough for a weeknight meal.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F.
2. Combine the chicken, chili powder, cumin, 1/2 teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper in a large bowl and toss to coat.
3. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until it just begins to smoke. Add the chicken and cook, undisturbed, until it just starts to brown in spots, about 2 minutes. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until the onions are tender, about 3 minutes more.
4. Transfer the chicken and onion mixture to a large bowl and rinse and dry the skillet. Add the rice, 1/2 cup of the cheese, half the lime juice, 3/4 teaspoon salt and few grinds of pepper to the chicken and toss to combine. Divide the filling among the peppers.
5. Add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the skillet, arrange the peppers on top and turn to high heat. When the oil starts to sizzle, about 2 minutes, transfer to the oven and bake until the filling is hot and the peppers are softened, about 20 minutes. Sprinkle the remaining 1/2 cup cheese over the peppers and bake until melted, about 3 minutes more.
6. Drizzle the remaining lime juice over the peppers and top with the cilantro leaves. Serve with the sour cream, pico de gallo and guacamole, if desired

**SOURCE AND CREDITS** Courtesy of Food Network Kitchen Copyright 2017 Television Food Network, G.P. All rights reserved.

# Salmon and Zucchini Sheet Pan Dinner



- PREP TIME 10 min
- TOTAL TIME 40 min
- SERVES 2

It really doesn't get much easier than this: salmon, tomatoes and zucchini on one sheet pan for minimal clean-up. For some added heft, pair with fluffy couscous or quinoa for a well-rounded meal that will leave you satisfied.

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup panko breadcrumbs

2 Tbsp grated Parmesan

1/4 cup parsley leaves, chopped

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 large plum tomatoes, halved crosswise

Nonstick cooking spray

2 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise

2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

1 12-oz center-cut salmon fillet, skin removed (about 1 1/2" thick)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Position a rack in the top third of the oven and preheat to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Toss the panko, Parmesan, parsley, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper together in a small bowl. Arrange the tomatoes in the center of the prepared baking sheet, cut-side up (trim a small slice from the bottom of each tomato if they will not stand upright) and spoon the panko mixture evenly over each. Spray the breadcrumbs lightly with cooking spray. Lay the zucchini halves cut-side up on one side of the tomatoes. Drizzle zucchini with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast until the vegetables begin to soften and the panko topping begins to brown, about 18 minutes.
3. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and place the salmon fillet on the other side of the tomatoes. Drizzle the salmon with the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast until the zucchini and tomatoes are completely tender and browned in spots, and the salmon is cooked through but moist, about 12 minutes more. Divide salmon and vegetables between two plates and serve.

## Source and Credits

Courtesy of Food Network Kitchen  
Copyright 2016 Television Food Network, G.P. All rights reserved.

# Vietnamese-Style Chicken Soup with Dumplings

This hearty soup packs a lot of Asian flair courtesy of Thai basil, lemongrass, ginger and star anise.

## INGREDIENTS

### Soup

- 6 cups (1.5 L) water
- 2 lb(s) (900 g) chicken bones
- 2 Tbsp (30 mL) fish sauce
- 2 shallots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 5 cloves
- 5 star anise
- 1 piece ginger, about 1-inch (2.5 cm), peeled and sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1 piece lemongrass, about 6 inches (15 cm)
- 3 sprigs Thai basil
- 2 Tbsp (30 mL) sugar
- 1 tsp (5 mL) salt

### Dumplings

- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) grapeseed oil
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) ginger
- 1 green onion, minced
- 8 oz (226 g) ground chicken
- ½ tsp (2.5 mL) salt
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) mint, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) cilantro, finely chopped
- 12 wonton wrappers

### Garnish

- 1 tsp grapeseed oil
- 10 medium shiitake mushrooms, sliced
- 1 medium bok choy, thinly sliced
- ½ lime, quartered
- ¼ cup cilantro, leaves picked

## DIRECTIONS

### Soup

1. Place all ingredients in a pressure cooker. Cook according to instructions for 20- 30 minutes.
2. Strain soup and keep warm for assembly.

### Dumplings

1. In a sauté pan, add oil over medium heat and cook the garlic, ginger, green onion until soft, about 3-5 minutes.
2. Add the chicken and salt and cook through, about 7-10 minutes.
3. Fold in herbs.
4. Place a small dollop of meat mixture into the centre of the wonton wrappers. Brush edges of wrappers with water and seal tightly into a 'parcel' by gathering the wrapper at the top and twisting it.

### Garnish

1. In a medium pot, add oil on medium low heat. Add shiitakes and bok choy, cook for 6-10 minutes, or until mushrooms have softened.
2. Add dumplings.
3. Pour strained stock over dumplings and cook for about 5-8 minutes.
4. Serve with a wedge of lime and cilantro leaves.

SERVES 4

**F**rom Marelisa Fabrega's e-book "How to be creative- a handbook for alchemists" she has made a list of 25 ways to be more creative. Here are some of my favorites.

**Remember there is more than one right answer.** Consider the high school science exam where one question was: "How can you determine the height of a building using a barometer?"

Most students, after recalling the teacher's lecture on this subject, gave the answer, "Measure the atmospheric pressure at the top of the building, measure it at the bottom of the building, note the difference, and then calculate the height." Two students were marked wrong for their answers. One responded, "Take the barometer to the top of the building, throw it off the roof, time how long it takes until you hear a crash, and then use the acceleration-through-space formula to calculate the distance it traveled." That answer was not what the teacher was expecting; but it works.

**Watch "The Three Stooges".** Laughing has been shown to help people think more broadly, associate freely, and notice complex relationships. One study found that people who had just watched a video of television bloopers were better at solving a puzzle long used by psychologists to test creative thinking.

**Drench Yourself In Creativity.** Go to museums and gallery openings. Go to the symphony and to rock concerts. Read great works of literature. Go to poetry readings.

**Challenge your assumptions.** A fat, round watermelon takes up a lot of room. Instead of just assuming that watermelons had to be round, Japanese farmers began inserting melons in square glass cases while they were still growing on the vine. The end result was a square watermelon which fits conveniently in the refrigerators in which they're transported. What assumptions are you making that are stopping you from finding a solution to your problem?

**Shift gears.** Take time off and put together a jigsaw puzzle. Follow Einstein's advice: take a nap. Isaac Asimov was quoted as saying that when he got stuck writing a book he would simply put the project aside and start writing a completely different book.

Seymour Cray, the legendary designer of high-speed computers, used to divide his time between building the next generation super computer and digging an underground tunnel below his Chippewa Falls house. Thomas Edison, a man with over 1,000 patents to his credit, would go down to the dock and fish. Ray Bradbury would go for a bike ride.

## NEW CREATIVE PROJECT IDEAS

In mid-January it's always nice to think about springtime in the garden. Here are two of my plant-related projects! -Angela



### Tea Cup Succulent

All you need is a pretty teacup (must be pretty), a few small pebbles or rocks, potting soil and a succulent. I have picked my succulents up at Home Depot or the local grocery store for just a couple of dollars. Place a few of the pebbles in the bottom of the tea cup. This is important so that there is a bit of drainage since there is no hole in the bottom of the cup.

Then just fill with potting soil and add your succulent. The great thing about succulents is they are really hard to kill! They are tough and they don't like a lot of water so if you forget to water it for a while, no worries!!

What a fun, easy and inexpensive gift.

Old vintage colanders make a great container too because it has built in drainage holes.

### Painted Rock Garden Markers

Colorful painted make perfect garden markers! Great for your flowers, herbs, and vegetables. Great gift idea too!



#### Supplies

- Smooth rocks
- Patio Paint or outdoor craft paint in various colors
- Black paint marker or Sharpie
- Paintbrushes
- Pencil or toothpick
- Patio Paint clear coat or clear outdoor sealer

### Painted rock garden markers-Instructions

1. Wash the rocks and dry them thoroughly. It may be necessary to let them sit for an hour or so as rocks are porous and can absorb water.
2. Which rocks you use with depend on what you have growing in your garden. For example, you will need a longer or larger rock for "marjoram" than you will for "kale" as there are more letters to fit on the rock. You can use a piece of paper to map out what rocks will get what names.
3. Paint the rocks in desired colors. For the longest life of your plant markers, it's important to allow adequate drying time; allow at least 1 hour between coats. Some colors may need more coats than others in order to cover.
4. Once your rocks are painted and dry, use a black paint pen or Sharpie marker to write the names of your plants on each rock.
5. To decorate, use the handle end of a large craft paintbrush to dot on various spots in different colors. Use a smaller paintbrush handle to add smaller spots.
6. Finally, use the tip of a pencil or a toothpick to add tiny white dots to the center of the larger dots. Allow the rocks to dry for 2-3 hours.
7. Apply a clear coat and allow them to dry overnight.

## BUC COMMUNITY NEWS

---

Thank you to everyone for your continued prayers and financial donations.

If you have news you'd like to share in the next newsletter please email the details to Angela at [balzacunitedchurch@gmail.com](mailto:balzacunitedchurch@gmail.com) or call her at 587-229-3878.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Peter Poohkay and family as they grieve the passing of Norma who passed away at the age of 93 on December 27. If you wish to send your condolences to Peter, his address is: Peter Poohkay, Room 212 West Highlands Good Samaritan, 2687 Garry Dr W, West Lethbridge, AB T1J 5A3.

We wish Pat Koosey blessings for a speedy recovery from a broken ankle.

Chalking doors is a Christian tradition that happens on January 6th when we remember the Magi visit to the Christ child. It is a way to mark that event as well as bless our homes as we begin a New Year. It is an invitation for Jesus to be our daily guest in our homes.

### **Instructions for Blessing the Home**

*Using chalk, mark the lintel of your front door as follows: 20 + C + M + B + 21* saying:  
The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son.  
May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year.  
Amen.

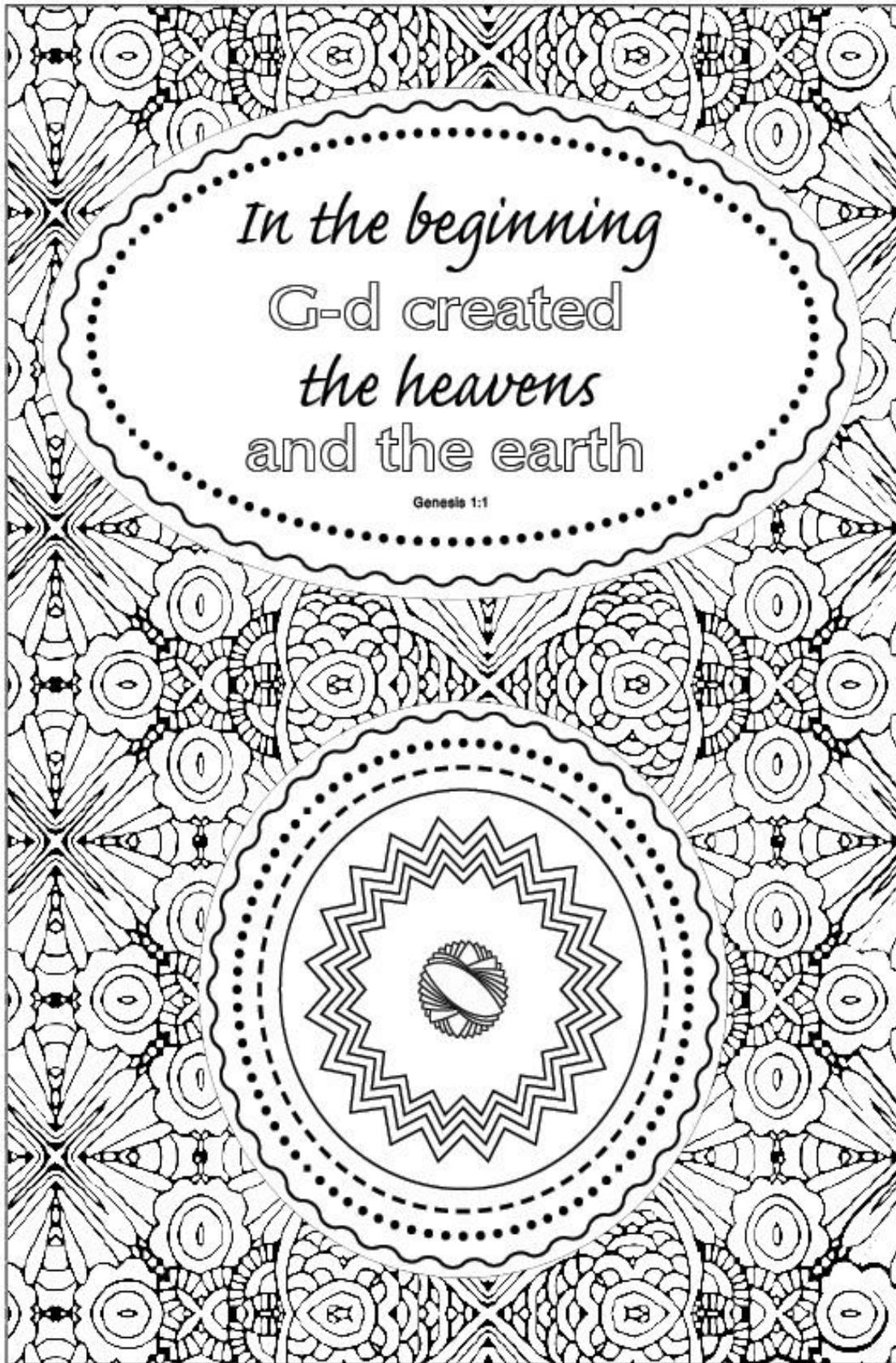
The letters have two meanings. First, they represent the initials of the Magi — Caspar, Malchior, and Balthazar — who came to visit Jesus in His first home. They also abbreviate the Latin phrase, *Christus mansionem benedicat*: "May Christ bless the house."

The "+" signs represent the cross, and the "20" at the beginning and the "21" at the end mark the year.

Taken together, this inscription is performed as a request for Christ to bless those homes so marked and that He stay with those who dwell therein throughout the entire year.



**CHALKING DOORS:** The main door of the Balzac United Church (left) has been chalked as a sign of Christ's blessing on this place throughout the entire year.

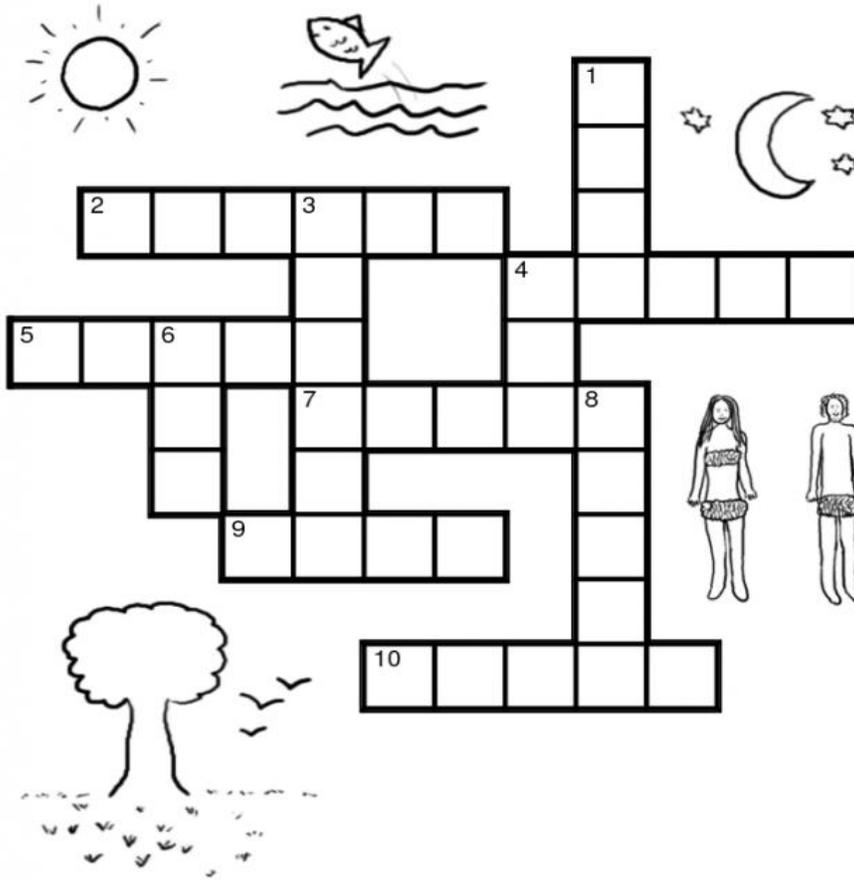


*In the beginning*  
G-d created  
*the heavens*  
and the earth

Genesis 1:1

# Creation Activity Worksheet

by SundaySchoolResources.co.uk



## Across

- 2 God created the moon on this day (6)
- 4 The earth was this before the creation (5)
- 5 God created these on the 5th day (5)
- 7 God created these on the 3rd day (5)
- 9 The name of the Garden the man and woman lived in (4)
- 10 God created this on the 1st day (5)

## Down

- 1 The name of the man that God created (4)
- 3 God did this on the 7th day (6)
- 4 The name of the woman that God created (3)
- 6 God created the woman by taking this from the man (3)
- 8 God created land creatures on this day (5)

ANIMALS  
 BEGINNING  
 CREATION  
 EARTH  
 GARDEN  
 GOD  
 HEAVENS  
 LIGHT  
 MAN  
 PLANTS  
 SEA  
 STARS  
 WOMAN

