

In the beginning, before the earth,
There was chaos and darkness,
God created order and light,
All was well.

In the East, in Eden, God made a garden,
God made a man and a woman and placed them in the garden,
All was well.

The man and the women lived peacefully with each other,
With the animals and with the plants and, most importantly,
with God.
All was well.

But...
One thing troubled the man and the women,
They wanted to know God's secrets.
They wanted to know who God was and what God was like.
These secrets had been hidden by God to protect the man and the women,
But they thought they knew better than God
And they ate from a forbidden tree.

Disaster.

Sin entered the world.
The man and the woman could no longer live in the garden,
God banished them from their peaceful place out into a wilderness.

All was not well.

Angels with swords of fire were placed at the gates of the garden,
there was no way back.



Time passed, a

The family of the man and woman grew large.
But all was not well.

Sin was everywhere.
There was envy, jealousy, suffering and, worst of all,
Death.

The people tried to find their way back to God,
They built a high building to try and reach God, but it collapsed.
They made their own new gods,
But these had no power – They brought no peace or happiness.

God saw their suffering and tried to reach them,
God gave the people some commandments to help them to live more
peacefully in the wilderness.

Do not kill
Do not steal
Do not worship other gods.

God sent prophets to tell the people how to live,
But often the people would not listen.
God sent messages of hope that one day all would be well again.

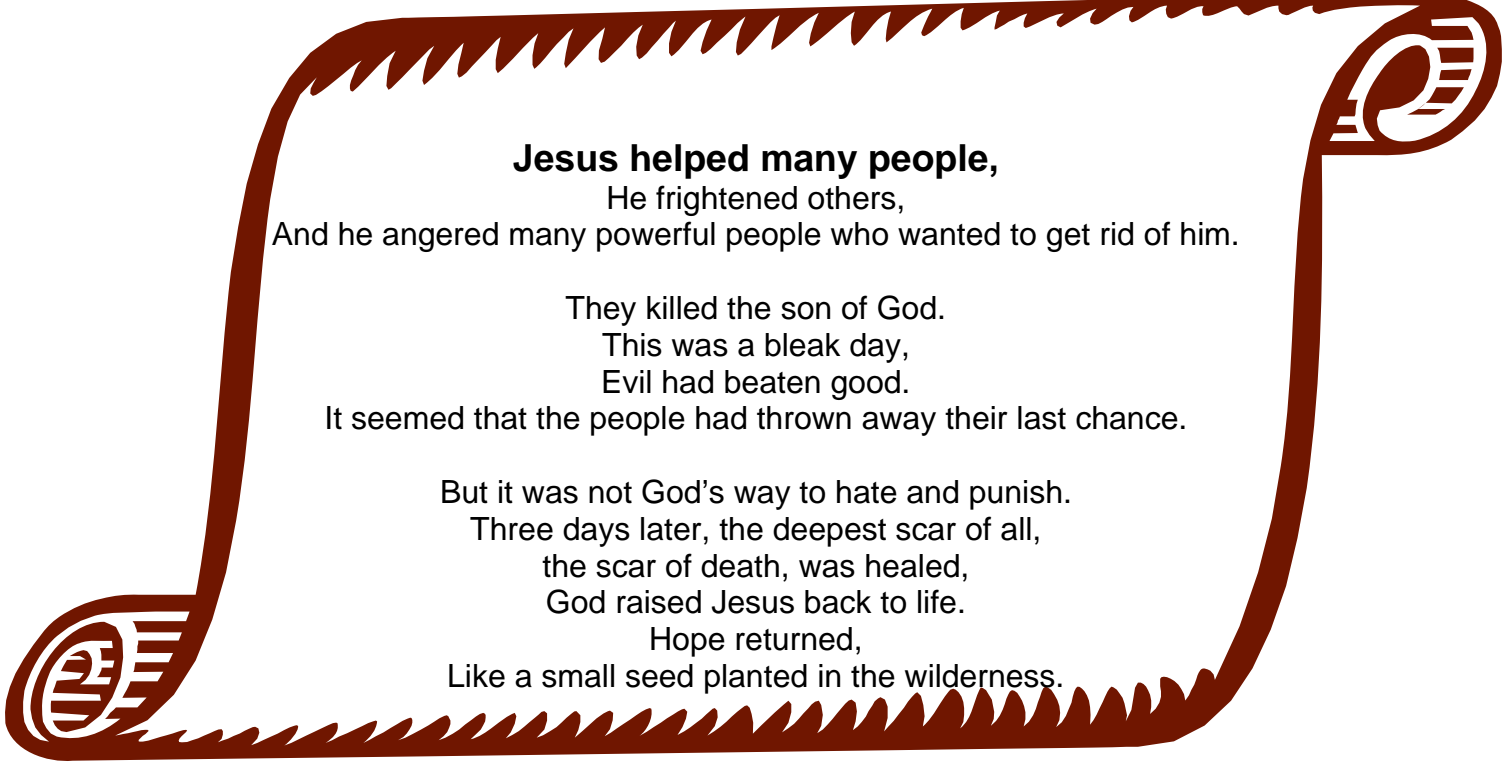
There were some good times,
But it was never as wonderful as it had been in the garden.



Then the moment came.

It was time to give the people in the wilderness
a final chance to make all things well,
To find the garden again.

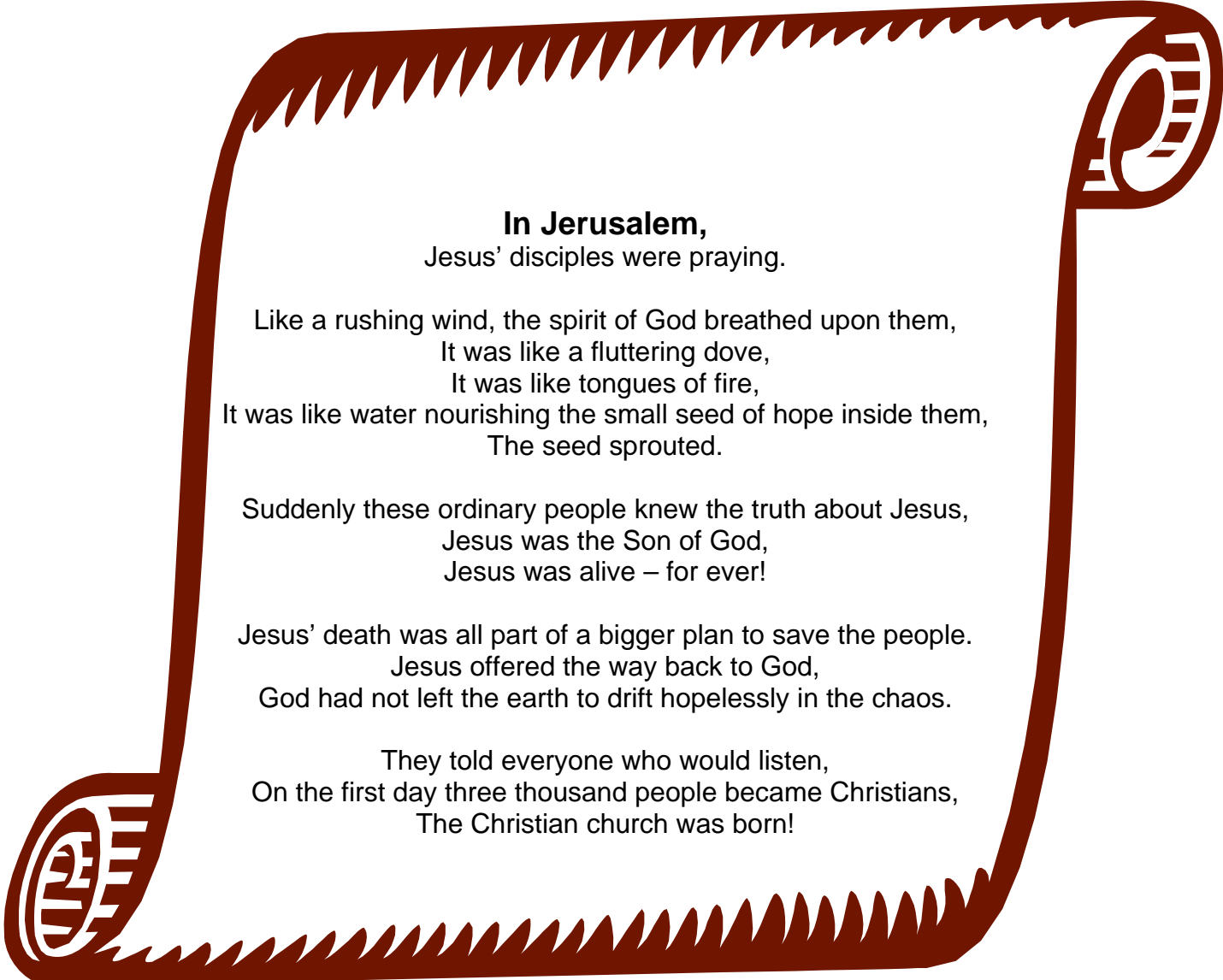
God's son JESUS was sent by God to free the people from the wilderness
To teach them,
To heal them,
To save them,
To turn them away from sin,
To turn them back to God.



Jesus helped many people,
He frightened others,
And he angered many powerful people who wanted to get rid of him.

They killed the son of God.
This was a bleak day,
Evil had beaten good.
It seemed that the people had thrown away their last chance.

But it was not God's way to hate and punish.
Three days later, the deepest scar of all,
the scar of death, was healed,
God raised Jesus back to life.
Hope returned,
Like a small seed planted in the wilderness.



In Jerusalem,
Jesus' disciples were praying.

Like a rushing wind, the spirit of God breathed upon them,
It was like a fluttering dove,
It was like tongues of fire,
It was like water nourishing the small seed of hope inside them,
The seed sprouted.

Suddenly these ordinary people knew the truth about Jesus,
Jesus was the Son of God,
Jesus was alive – for ever!

Jesus' death was all part of a bigger plan to save the people.
Jesus offered the way back to God,
God had not left the earth to drift hopelessly in the chaos.

They told everyone who would listen,
On the first day three thousand people became Christians,
The Christian church was born!