

Activity Packet

A Place to Pray
by Doreen Klein Robinson

NOTE FROM DOREEN

Dear Reader,

When I first read about the fire that destroyed historic Middle Collegiate Church in New York City, I was deeply saddened. Thankfully, nobody was inside, but this beautiful house of worship suffered devastating damage, and its congregation was left without a place to pray.

As a journalist, I wanted answers to crucial questions. *What did the church look like before? Will they be able to rebuild? Where will they pray?*

Research led me to the story of Reverend Dr. Jacqueline Lewis of Middle Collegiate Church and Rabbi Joshua Stanton of East End Temple. They are the inspiration for the story you are about to read. A story that celebrates their faithful friendship and is a testament to the Golden Rule: *Love thy neighbor.* A story that honors the values instilled in me by my Jewish Israeli immigrant parents: repairing the world (*tikkun olam*), doing good deeds (*mitzvot*), and pursuing righteousness through charitable actions (*tzedakah*).

I wrote this story to show how two children, two spiritual leaders, and two congregations can come together with open hearts and open doors to make the world a better place. I hope it gives you faith and brings you joy.

~ Doreen Klein Robinson



STORY COMPREHENSION

Check the correct answer:

1. The boy and his family go to:

- a church
- a temple
- a park

2. The girl and her family go to:

- a church
- a temple
- a store

3. What happens to the church?

- It moves
- It closes
- It burns in a fire

4. Who helps the church find a place to pray?

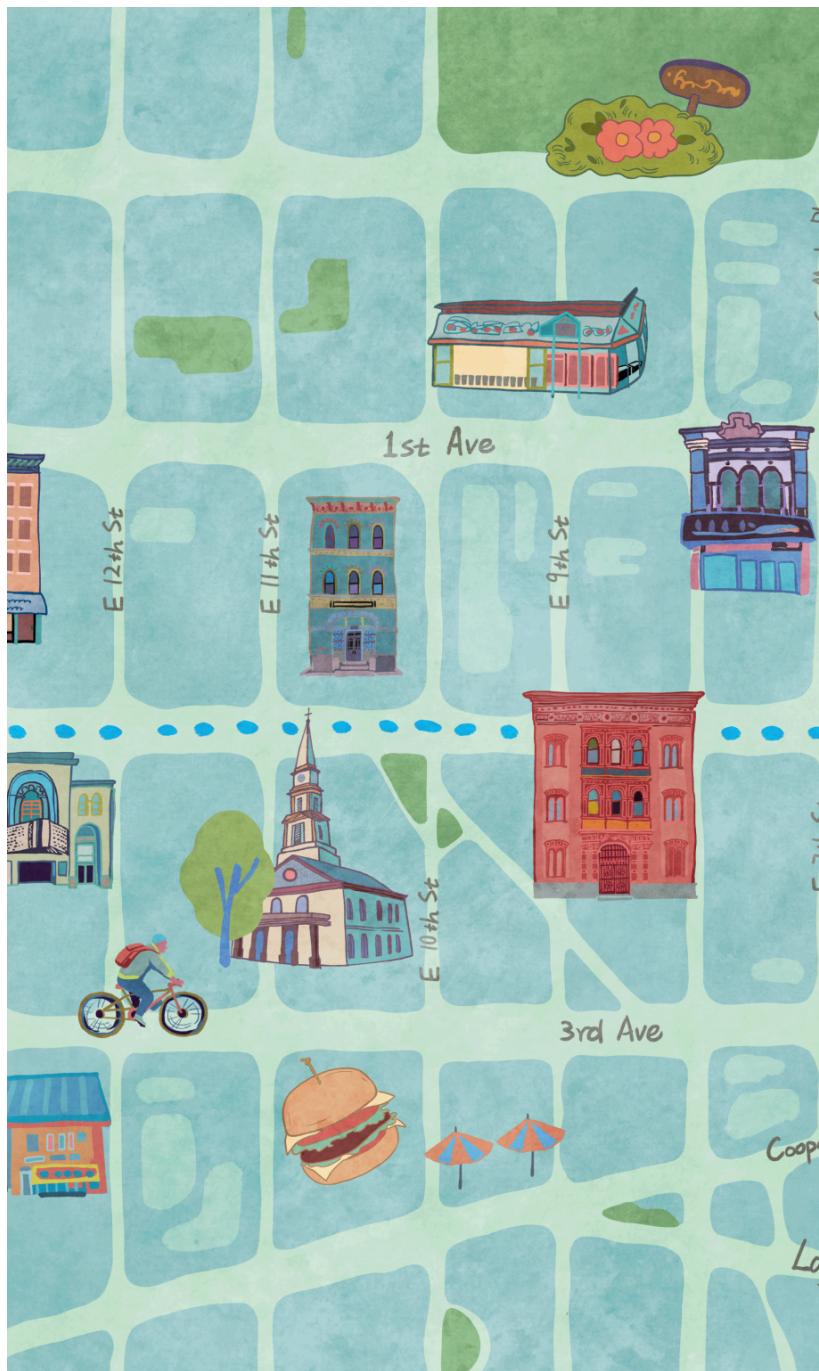
- The boy
- The rabbi and the temple
- Nobody

5. What does it mean to have an open heart?

- Being kind
- Helping others
- Welcoming people
- All of the above

FINISH THE MAP

Add in the right side of the map to draw in where the church would be:



WORD SEARCH

Find the hidden words!

Z X K D H D G O K M E O S K V E W R P W M K F H F
T M Z I H S E H D H J I Q B A L W X R U F G L H Z
A O H J A L O B B X S C C K A P U Y E T F T X R Q
Q J N B F H H R K X W K H J U R J H S L L N E E R
M Q P U W N Y V R W V Y G U X I L M U W X C T V I
U E S L O M L Y J C O M M U N I T Y K E L N I E R
O E J L G F A F W T L L R T E M P L E S Z S O R E
K J E C G L Q B A C Z L N P M B I X Q Z F Z P E G
Y J L R M L S H A R E H N B C O P Z L C I J H N X
A Z A Q A T U P N C S K A I G G G L H P R X F D X
T D P W A R N K X B Z B M W U X S I D G E B M S T
C Y Y S N U C G Z D D N X U T T Q J H F F K G L X
Y K V U S U L H K P Z T P S J I S J O G V L X C Q
N H J K B S W T I G W M N I S H I L P N V V Q N V
H Y K C Z C E F J C C R K T I O N F E Y Y D O Y N
V Y N R Z C V M Y L Y T Y F M J B V M C V N R E L
Q Q U C L E E O A U A P A R U X W A T O R E X K T
E B G T C A M K E V Q D R K D E V I B R D I O Z G
M L O T O F B X R Q X C P H O W P N Z A M R Z K B
E J U F Q G X J J G O S C Q O E G F I B G F E L E
J F H T V V B F H E A K H Q R M C O C B U J K A L
F B K J P E R A Z I K A R E S O A L R I B U Z B L
R H V D C H U R C H H E K R C C N F N X U V I M U
F K Z N J Q P B E N Q Y O N D H Y J W Y K H O J I
Q V G U D D Y H Q L V F J X M W I F Y O J Y P S A

TEMPLE

FIRE

RABBI

SHARE

CHURCH

FRIEND

COMMUNITY

DOORS

PRAY

HOPE

REVEREND

BELL

WORD SEARCH

Solutions

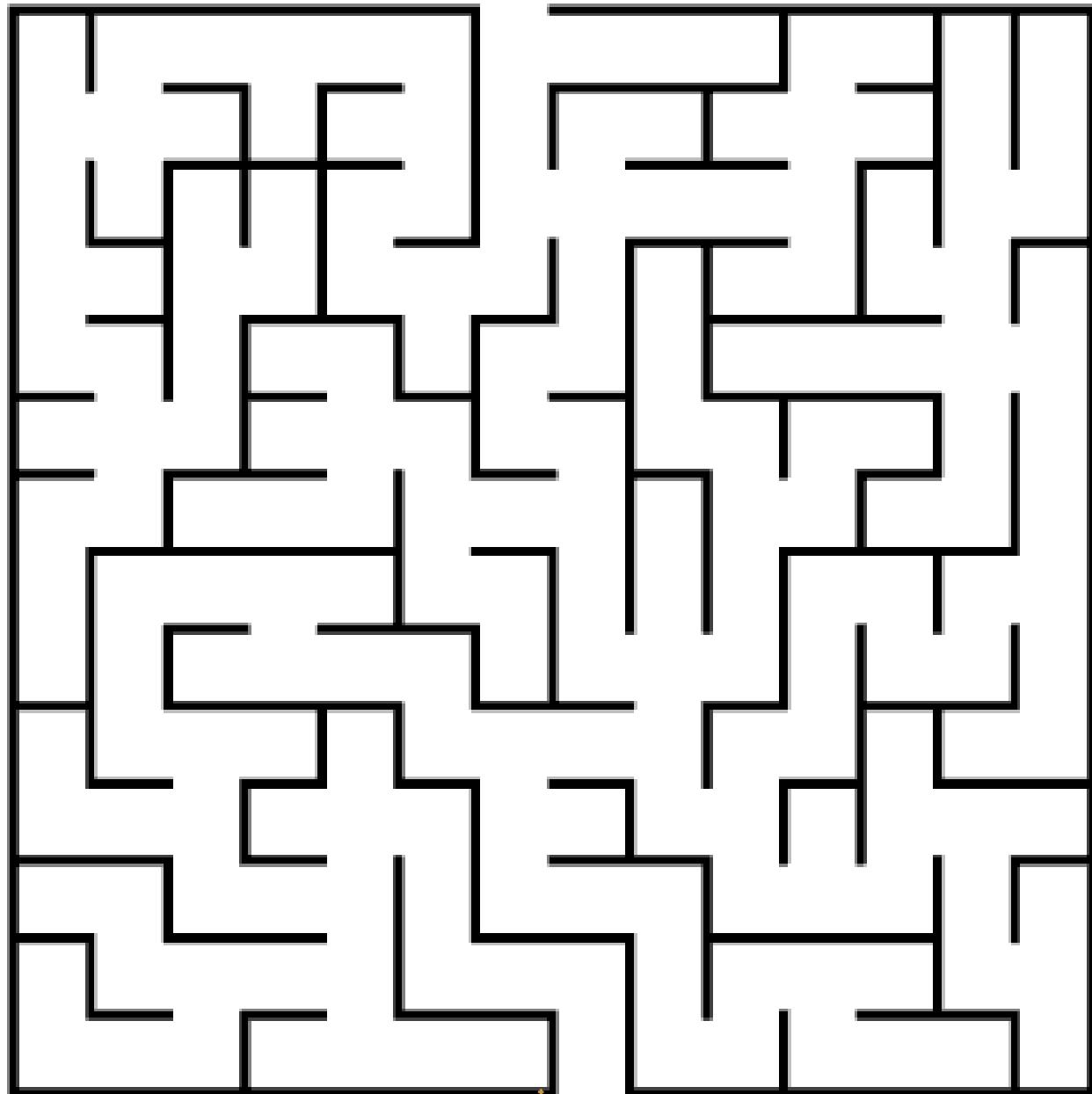
Did you find them all?

Z X K D H D G O K M E O S K V E W R P W M K F H F
T M Z I H S E H D H J I Q B A L W X R U F G L H Z
A O H J A L O B B X S C C K A P U Y E T F T X R Q
Q J N B F H H R K X W K H J U R J H S L L N E E R
M Q P U W N Y V R W V Y G U X I L M U W X C T V I
U E S L O M L Y J C O M M U N I T Y K E L N I E R
O E J L G F A F W T L L R T E M P L E S Z S O R E
K J E C G L Q B A C Z L N P M B I X Q Z F Z P E G
Y J L R M L S H A R E H N B C O P Z L C I J H N X
A Z A Q A T U P N C S K A I G G G L H P R X F D X
T D P W A R N K X B Z B M W U X S I D G E B M S T
C Y Y S N U C G Z D D N X U T T Q J H F F K G L X
Y K V U S U L H K P Z T P S J I S J O G V L X C Q
N H J K B S W T I G W M N I S H I L P N V V Q N V
H Y K C Z C E F J C C R K T I O N F E Y Y D O Y N
V Y N R Z C V M Y L Y T Y F M J B V M C V N R E L
Q Q U C L E E O A U A P A R U X W A T O R E X K T
E B G T C A M K E V Q D R K D E V I B R D I O Z G
M L O T O F B X R Q X C P H O W P N Z A M R Z K B
E J U F Q G X J J G O S C Q O E G F I B G F E L E
J F H T V V B F H E A K H Q R M C O C B U J K A L
F B K J P E R A Z I K A R E S O A L R I B U Z B L
R H V D C H U R C H H E K R C C N F N X U V I M U
F K Z N J Q P B E N Q Y O N D H Y J W Y K H O J I
Q V G U D D Y H Q L V F J X M W I F Y O J Y P S A

MAZE ACTIVITY

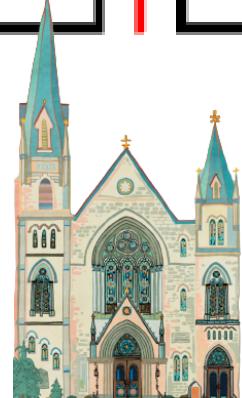
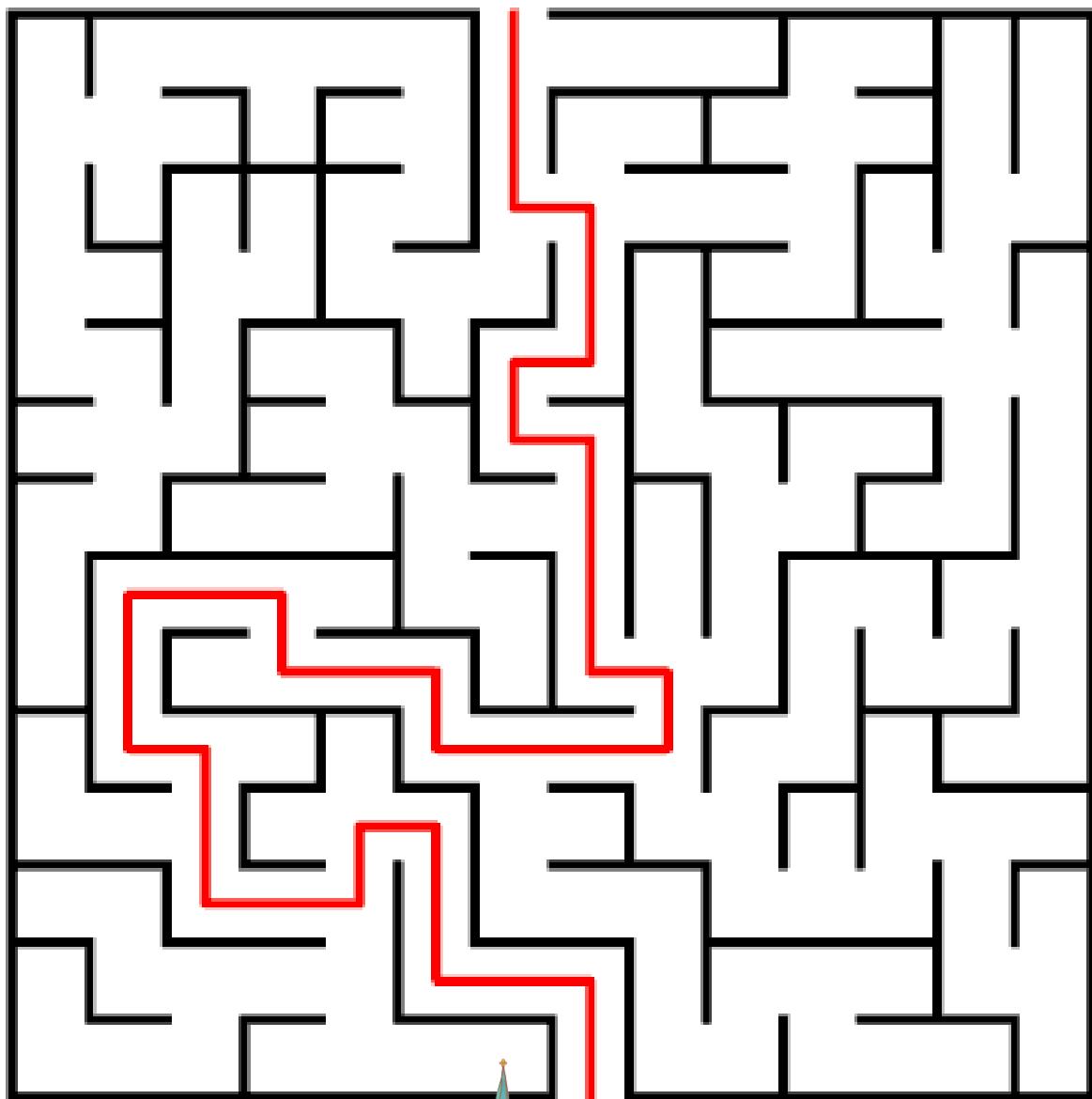
Find your way to the end of the maze
to get to the church!

start here!



MAZE ACTIVITY

Solution



FIELD TRIP

Seek out the stars the next time you're in
NYC!

WHAT ARE THE STARS ON THE GROUND?

Known as the Yiddish Theater Walk of Fame, two rows of granite stars are embedded in the sidewalk at the intersection of Second Avenue and East 10th Street in New York's East Village. Each plaque commemorates a famous star of the Yiddish Theater. Yiddish theater originated in Romania and made its way to New York in 1882. With the growing population of Yiddish-speaking immigrants, eleven of the twenty-four Yiddish theaters in America were located in New York.

The stars were installed in 1984 by Holocaust survivor Abe Lebewohl, the late owner of the Second Avenue Deli, and are an important part of the neighborhood's history.



The stars on the Yiddish Theater Walk of Fame

UNITY IN COMMUNITY

Write down something you would like to work on with your community:



CREATE A BELL

Create your own version of NEW YORK'S LIBERTY BELL

Materials:

- Paper cup or small plastic pot
- Paint & glitter (optional)
- Pipe cleaner, yarn, or ribbon
- Large bead or small jingle bell
- Pencil or scissors

Directions:

1. Turn the cup upside down. Use a pencil (or ask an adult to help with scissors) to carefully poke a small hole in the center of the bottom of the cup.
2. Decorate the outside of the cup using paint and glitter. Set it aside and allow it to dry completely.
3. Take a pipe cleaner, yarn, or ribbon and thread the bead or jingle bell onto one end. Secure it by twisting or tying a knot so it stays in place.
4. From inside the cup, push the loose end of the string or pipe cleaner up through the hole.
5. Pull gently until the bead or jingle bell hangs freely inside the cup.
6. Tie a knot or twist the pipe cleaner at the top of the cup so it does not slip back through the hole.
7. Shape the extra string or pipe cleaner into a loop to make a handle for holding and ringing your bell.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. The boy and the girl worship in different places. What do they have in common?
2. How do the boy and the girl feel when the church is destroyed by fire? How do their feelings change later in the story?
3. Why is losing a place to pray especially hard for the girl and her community?
4. What does the phrase “open hearts and open doors” mean in this story?
5. Why was it important for the temple to share its space with the church?
6. How does the boy show kindness and leadership, even though he is young?
7. What does the Liberty Bell symbolize after the fire? Why do you think it is important?
8. What is one way you can show kindness or help your community, like the characters in the book?

