Theme

Books to read together

Reading the Bible together

Looking at the Book of Common Prayer together

What we need to do this work together

Talking or writing together

To provide sensory exposure
Connect with a deployed loved one
Valueing children’s treasures

*Baby Faces* (Sesame Beginnings)

Luke 2 (The Christmas Story)
Matthew 2:1-12 (The story of the Wisemen)

Thanksgiving for the Birth or Adoption of a Child, p439ff

2 8-1/2 x 11 inch pieces of felt
yarn
sandpaper, soft flannel, fake fur, cotton balls, a small rock,
small piece of velvet or gold foil, a small mirror, family photos, patch cut from an old uniform
sandwich zip lock bags
notebook rings

Talk about being happy, sad, afraid. Per the directions on
the next page, pull the items from the “feeling bag” and talk about each one.
Sew the felt together to make a bag with open top. You can also punch holes down the sides and bottom of the felt and lace them together with the yarn. In the bag include the items from first page. The sandpaper reminds us of many Bible stories that took place in the desert. The soft flannel reminds us of the swaddling clothes Mary in which wrapped Baby Jesus, the velvet or foil reminds us of the Wise men, cotton balls remind us of sheep, fake fur reminds us of Mary’s donkey, rock reminds us of mountains. Use your imagination to put such sensory objects in the bag. A piece of your family member’s uniform or other clothing will serve as a wonderful reminder. The mirror is for the child to see themself as a Child of God.

For the photo album, place photos inside the sandwich ziplock bag. Punch a hole in the zip end of the bag and thread onto a ring (notebook ring purchased at office supply store). The photos can be changed out as you wish. Make one to send to your family member who is away.

Cut pictures of people from magazines who look happy, sad, afraid, mad, etc. Fold the pictures into different shapes (triangles, squares, stars, etc.) and make a game of guessing how the person in the picture feels and then unfold the picture.

For your family devotion, include your feeling bag and your “photo album” along with candle.

Prayer for Those Absent
O loving God, who has given us family and friends; be with all those whom we love who cannot be with us, guard and bless them wherever they may be, grace them with joy, protect them from all evil, and bring them safely to us once again. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

(Anne E. Kitch, *The Anglican Family Prayer Book*)