**Reading across the miles**

**Theme**

- Help with transitions
- Family love
- Family traditions
- Honor the power of stories

*The Kissing Hand* (Audrey Penn)

**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**

**John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall have eternal life.

*Baptismal Liturgy, p. 308 Book of Common Prayer*  
“you are sealed as Christ’s own forever...”

**Small heart-shaped box (could be brown cardboard from a craft store, a plastic heart box, etc.)**

**Items to put in the box**

- Copy of the liturgy for deployment found in this “Across the Miles” resource.
- Little heart stickers

**Sacraments are an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.** The bread and wine at Eucharist, the water and oil at baptism are such signs. We wear crosses to remind us that we are Christian. We kiss one another to show our love for each other. We have birthday cakes with candles and special gifts, Christmas trees, Easter baskets. Chester’s mother kissed his hand and he knew that he would always have her love.

As family members we can use the family ritual for those leaving.
Reading across the miles

Making something together

The heart shaped box can contain things that remind children that they are loved. Have the child choose such objects. Make a similar box for your deployed family member. Include heart stickers, a small cross and “Jesus Loves Me” written on a small card.

To go with the family liturgy for the deployed person include reminders of your family celebrations during the year - Christmas, Easter, birthdays and other special events that you observe as a family such as first day of school, piano recitals, sporting events to be given as reminders of the family. Perhaps the deployed family member can include some such symbols for the rest of the family as well.

Singing and praying together

For your family center for your devotions include your heart box. Look at the items in the box and talk about how much you are loved.

Sing “Jesus Loves Me”

   Jesus loves me this I know
   For the Bible tells me so.
   Little ones to him belong.
   They are weak but he is strong.
   Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.
   Yes, Jesus loves me - the Bible tells me so.

Perhaps you can sing together and say bedtime prayers together when you can talk to each other on the telephone or Skype.