

BAPTIST FEATURES

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CHILDREN'S PAGE
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BEAUTIFUL SWANS
BY: Enola Chamberlin

"Those are swans, aren't they?" Lynn asked as she and her mother stood on the edge of the lake in the park and watched the beautiful big white birds float by.

"Yes," Mother said, "Those are what we call mute swans because, if they have a voice they never use it."

"Are there other swans?" Lynn asked.

"Yes," Mother said. "We have the American Whistling swan. It is pure white with the exception of a yellow spot between its eyes. By its name you know it can whistle and it can reach high notes or low notes. It nests in the far north in summer and then comes south in the fall the same as its cousins the geese and ducks do. It goes as far south as the Gulf of Mexico to spend the winter."

"What other swans are there?" Lynn asked.

"A black swan with a scarlet, white-banded bill comes from Australia," Mother said. "A white swan with a black head and neck comes from South America. We have one other American swan. This is the Trumpeter Swan. They are over five feet from the tip of their beaks to the ends of their tails. They are white like these swans here on the pond. Instead of being mute they have a voice like a bugle. People used to hear them in the skies in the spring and fall as we hear the geese today. We don't hear or see them anymore because there are so few of them living now."

"Do swans build nests in trees?" Lynn asked.

"No," Mother said. "They build up piles of weeds and grass and feathers and down. They lay around six white eggs. Both the father and the mother swan watch over the eggs and the young."

"Are the little swans called chicks?" Lynn asked.

"No, all swans have funny names," Mother said. "The father swan is called a cob; like corn cob. The mother swan is called a pen, just like what you write with. And a young swan is called a cygnet. That's a hard word to say, but it's pretty, isn't it?"

"Yes," Lynn said, "and even if a young swan does look like an ugly duckling he has a pretty name and he grows to be a beautiful bird."

"Yes, remember that," mother said, "because swans are some of the loveliest birds we have. People are sometimes like this."

"What do you mean Mother?" Lynn asked.

"Very often people who have not been converted are ugly in heart and spirit. When they take Jesus as their Saviour they are greatly changed," Mother replied.

"Oh yes, I know a verse that teaches that. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow' (Is. 1:18).

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SHELLS

BY: Gladys Cleone Carpenter

Low tides allow us to see some of the marvels that God has placed in the ocean. Then on the beaches we may gather shells---empty houses of strange nautical creatures.

Many people like to find conk shells. They are a large, heavy, spiral-shaped shell of tan color. The outside is rough, but the inside as far as one can see is pink. Beautiful lamps are made from them.

The starfish is always a popular find. He usually has five arms although there are varieties with more.

The round sand dollar is not easily seen as it is the color of the sands. In the center is a marking resembling flower petals. They range in size from those of about a dime to those of about a dollar. They are very fragil and become almost like sand when crushed.

One attractive shell found on Florida beaches is the angel wing. It is seven to eight inches long. Usually a pair is hindged together. They are white and delicate and their fluted ridges look like feathers.

Coquina shells are tiny, polished and all colors. Much of the rock underlying the soil of Florida is filled with coquina. Coquina makes good soup.

These creatures are God's creatures and he takes pleasure in them for the Psalmist said, "Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he. . . . in the seas" (Psalms 135:6).

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TALKING WITH GOD

BY: Harriet A. Roorbach

Soon it will be Thanksgiving Day
And I can make my own
Prayer of thanks to God.

I'm thankful for my mother and father
And for their love
And care.
Help me, God, to show my love.

I'm thankful that I am well and strong,
That I have good food,
And warm clothes.
Help me, God, to share with those in need.

I'm thankful for all who teach me
Good things in school
And how to do right.
Help me, God, to always do my best.

I'm thankful for all my friends
Who talk and play together
We share and take turns.
Help me, God, to be a better friend.

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GOD'S SPRING OF BEAUTY

BY: Ellen Brown

It is a never-changing law
That God has made a flowing spring
Of beauties that will cleanse the world
Of sorrows and unpleasant things.

The fan-shaped sun that lights the earth,
The golden pattern of the stars,
The smile, the kindness of friends,
Are flowing, spring-like, near and far.