This week's Leadership Leaf is ACCEPTANCE. ACCEPTANCE is about stepping up, saying yes.

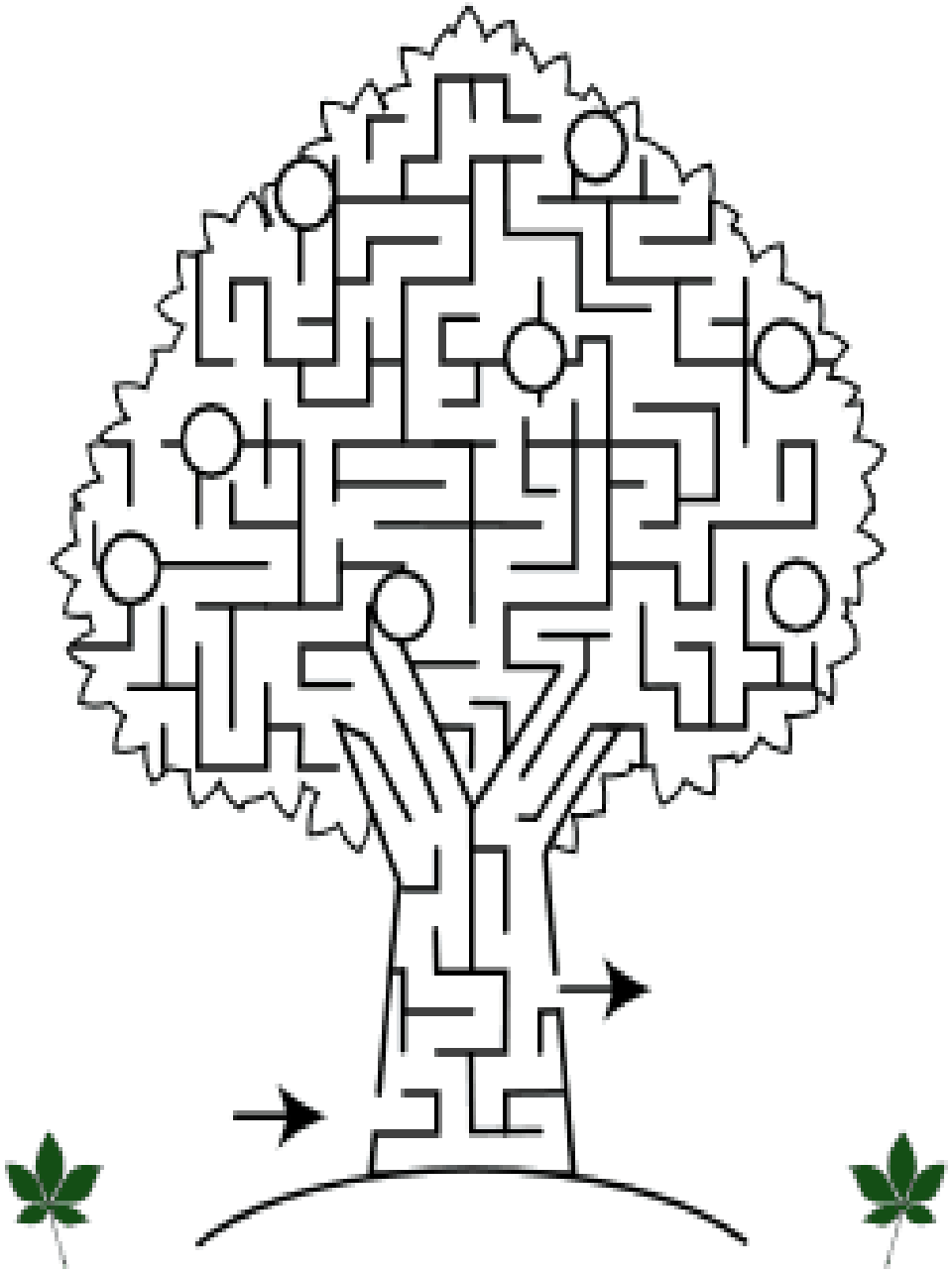
Our story is about the first man and woman in the Bible. The book of Genesis tells us that God plants a beautiful garden in the Land of Eden for the man he has created to live in. The man is named Adam. This Garden of Eden is full of opportunity for Adam, with beautiful streams of water, delicious fruit, and peaceful animals. God asks Adam to name each of the animals in the garden. Adam accepts this task and gives names to all of the animals.

God sees that the man Adam is lonely, and he creates a woman named Eve to live in the Garden of Eden with Adam. God gives Adam and Eve the responsibility to take care of the garden. It isn't a hard job because the plants and animals are already growing and providing plenty of food and protection for them. God tells them not to eat the fruit from the special trees in the middle of the garden. Leaving these trees alone is part of their responsibility. Adam and Eve accept this for a while.

But then they get tempted. They see the special trees every day. They look like good, fruitful trees.

The story in Genesis says that one day a serpent talks to Eve. We imagine it like a snake. The serpent tells Eve to eat the fruit from the special tree. Why not? Isn't Eve the mistress of the Garden? So Eve tries the fruit. Then Adam does too. The first man and woman are not doing the job they accepted from God. Of course, God knows. So Adam and Eve have to leave the Garden of Eden. Life is harder for them outside of the Garden. They must plant seeds and grow their own food. They need to take care of themselves and their children without the safety and comfort of the Garden.

But God still does not forget Adam and Eve or their children or their children's children. God accepts them and gives them more chances to accept their responsibilities to God and to each other.

This story reminds us of the importance of ACCEPTANCE. That God accepts us and that we "Say yes" to the opportunities and responsibilities that God gives to us.

Find your way through the tree.