

# My Advent Booklet



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

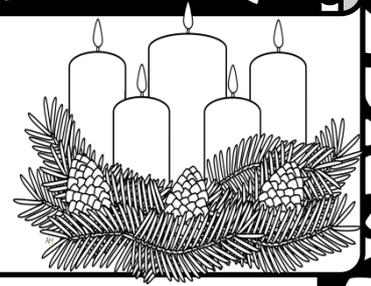
# Scope and Sequence

Thank you for your purchase! This booklet is a comprehensive unit about Advent. I hope it will be of value to your classroom! It is fifty four pages in length. Its contents include:

- 1) A colorable cover page
- 2) What is Advent?
- 3) The Advent Wreath
- 4) Week One – Hope – includes prelude, bible passage, response page, original modern story, response page, Hope conclusion page, action plan sheet, and Hope poem.
- 5) Week Two- – Peace – includes prelude, bible passage, response page, original modern story, response page, Peace conclusion page, action plan sheet, and Peace poem.
- 6) Week Three- – Joy– includes prelude, bible passage, response page, original modern story, response page, Joy conclusion pages, action plan sheet, and joy poem.
- 7) Week Four- – Love – includes prelude, bible passage, response page, original modern story, response page, Love conclusion pages, action plan sheet, and Love poem.
- 8) Extras – includes Advent poem, Advent acrostic, Advent Word Search, Christmas Day coloring activity

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# What Is Advent?

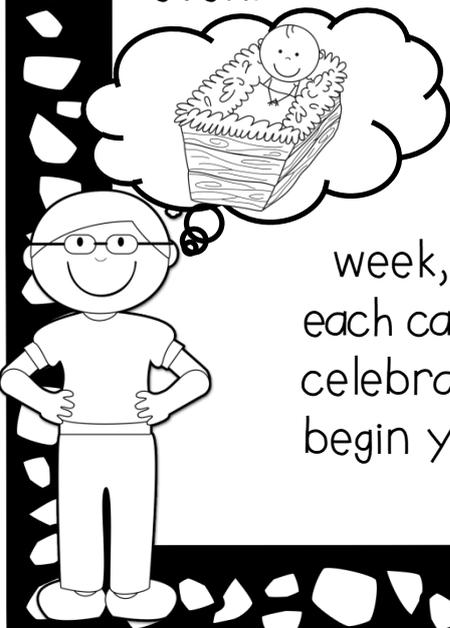


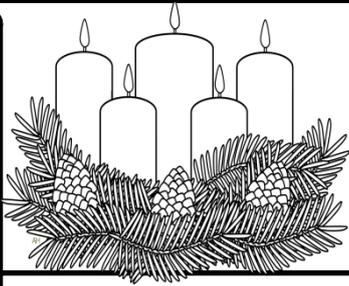
Advent is a special time! It is a time where we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. After all, Advent means 'coming.' We get ready to celebrate the coming of Christmas – Jesus' birthday!

Advent starts four Sundays before Christmas. It ends on Christmas Eve. On December 25<sup>th</sup> the Christmas season begins!

Advent is a very special time, as we prepare for the coming of Christ. It is a reminder that there is much more to Christmas than toys and gifts. After all, we do not call it 'Giftmas,' this special day is called **Christmas**. It is up to us to keep Christ in Christmas. We must remember that on that amazing night we received the greatest gift ever known to humankind – the gift of God's son, Jesus. Christmas is a time for celebration and joy. Advent is a time for waiting and preparation for this special event.

Our journey through Advent is four weeks long. During this time we will explore the themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Each week, we will light a candle on our Advent wreath. With each candle that we light, we will be one week closer to celebrating the birth of our Saviour! Are you ready to begin your Advent journey?





# The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a very special symbol. It acts as a focal point as we wait for our Savior. Remember, the wreath is not a decoration – it is a symbol of waiting during Advent. Each part of the Advent wreath has a special purpose.

## The Evergreen Branches

The base of the Advent wreath is made of evergreen branches. These branches are placed in a circle to signify that God is eternal – he has no beginning and no end. God's love for us is also never-ending.

## Candles

There are five candles on an Advent wreath. We light each candle as a reminder that Christ brought light to our world.

*Week One (Purple): The Candle of Hope* – this candle is a reminder that Jesus brought hope to the world. We can always trust in God.

*Week Two (Purple): The Candle of Peace* – Jesus is the Prince of Peace. God sent his Son Jesus to earth, in order that we may have peace.

*Week Three (Pink) The Candle of Joy* – Jesus fills our hearts with joy. We light this pink candle on the third week of Advent because our wait is nearing its end.

*Week Four (Purple) The Candle of Love* – God's greatest act of love for us was the gift of his Son, Jesus. Our world was without light and love, until Christ came into the world.

*Christ Candle* – The white candle in the middle of the Advent wreath is lit on Christmas. It represents the birth of our Saviour, Jesus!



# Reflection



1) What is the significance of the evergreen branches on the Advent wreath?

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2) Write the name of each Advent candle beside its corresponding week.

Week #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Week #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Week #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Week #4: \_\_\_\_\_

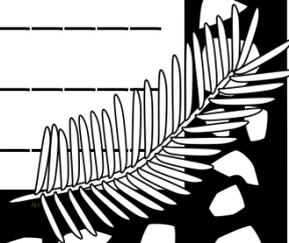
What is the name of the special white candle in the middle of the Advent wreath? \_\_\_\_\_

3) Why do we light candles each week? What does this light represent?

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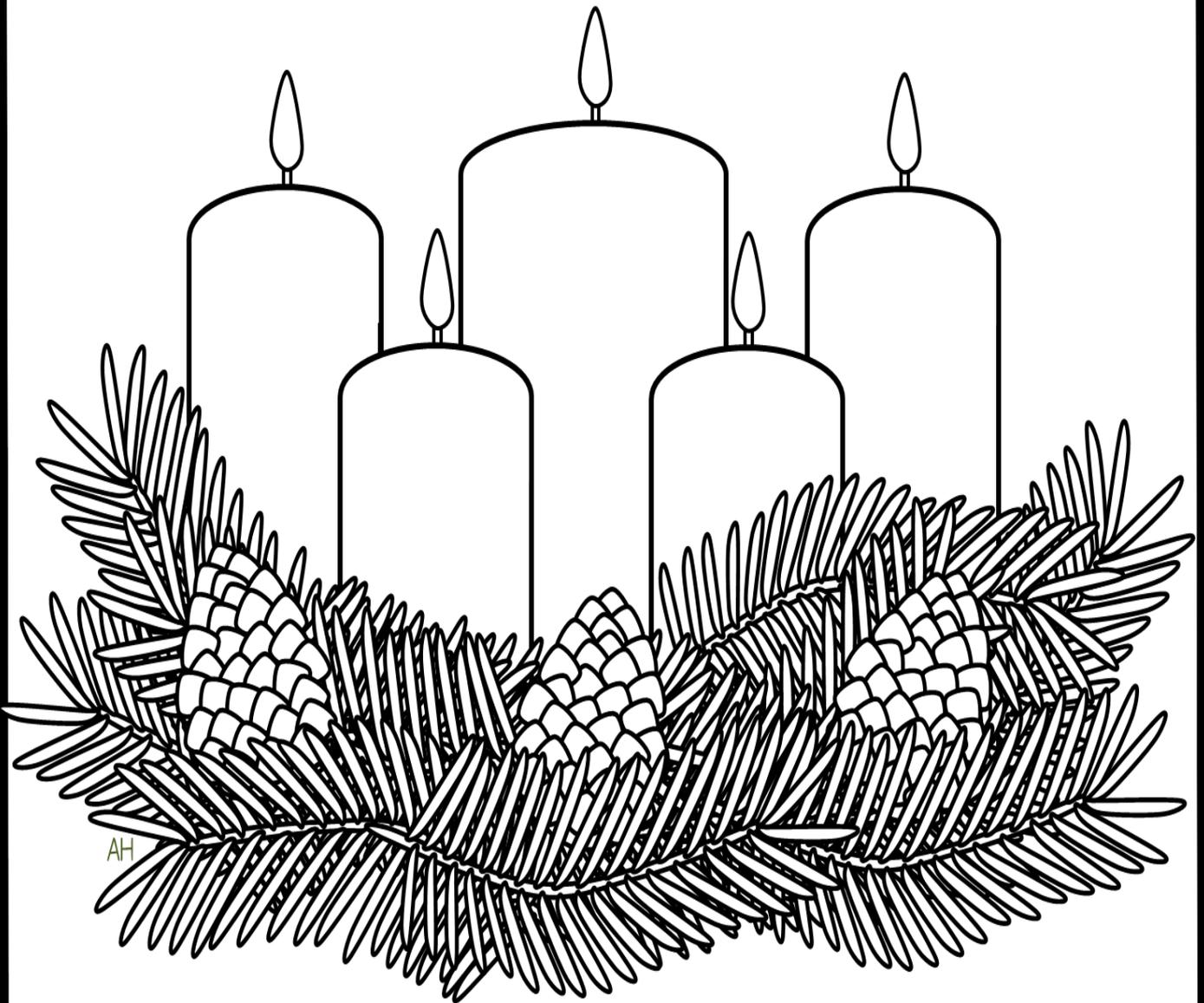
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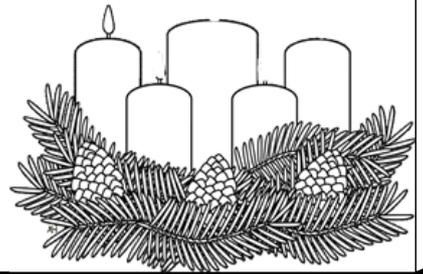
# The Advent Wreath

Instructions: Color the Advent wreath below. Remember, three candles are purple (the color of royalty) and one candle is pink (the color of joy and devotion). The middle candle is white – this is the Christ candle. The evergreen branches are green, and remain this way all year (just as God’s love for us remains ever-lasting).



AH

# Week #1: Hope



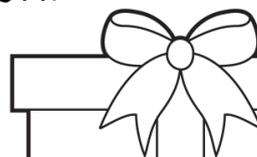
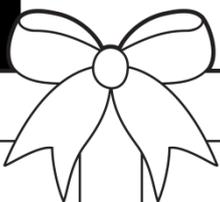
It is now the first week of Advent, and our journey has begun. Today we light the first candle on our wreath. The theme for this week is 'Hope.'

Before the coming of Christ, our world was full of sin and heartache. People all over the world felt that something was missing – something important. They put their hope into scripture, which told of the coming of a Messiah, the Son of God.

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

- Isaiah 9:6

During this week we will learn about the virtue of hope. We will explore the hope Jesus brought to the world. We will also discover how we are called to be hope for others. Each of us has special gifts and talents to share with the world, and there is no greater time to share these gifts than during Advent!



# Hope For The World



## Luke 1:30-35

Long ago, Mary was at home when a great flash of light lit up the room. Mary dropped to her knees and shook with fear. She did not know where this light came from. Suddenly, an angel appeared.

“Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will give birth to a son, and you will give him the name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son on the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign forever; his kingdom will never end.”

Mary was very confused by this news. She was soon to be married to a man named Joseph. They had not yet made plans to have children. “How can this be?” Mary asked the angel. “Since Joseph and I have not prepared for a child?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

So Mary put her trust in God. Her heart was filled with hope, as she prepared to give birth to our Savior, Jesus Christ.





# Reflection

1) At the beginning of this story, Mary was very afraid. Why was she scared?

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2) Mary is confused when she finds out that she is having a child, why is she confused?

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3) The angel brings good news. Mary finds out that she is having a very special child. Who is this child? Why is his birth so important?

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4) Mary puts her faith in God, and she is filled with hope. As people began to hear of this miracle pregnancy, they were filled with hope as well. Why did this pregnancy mean hope for the world?

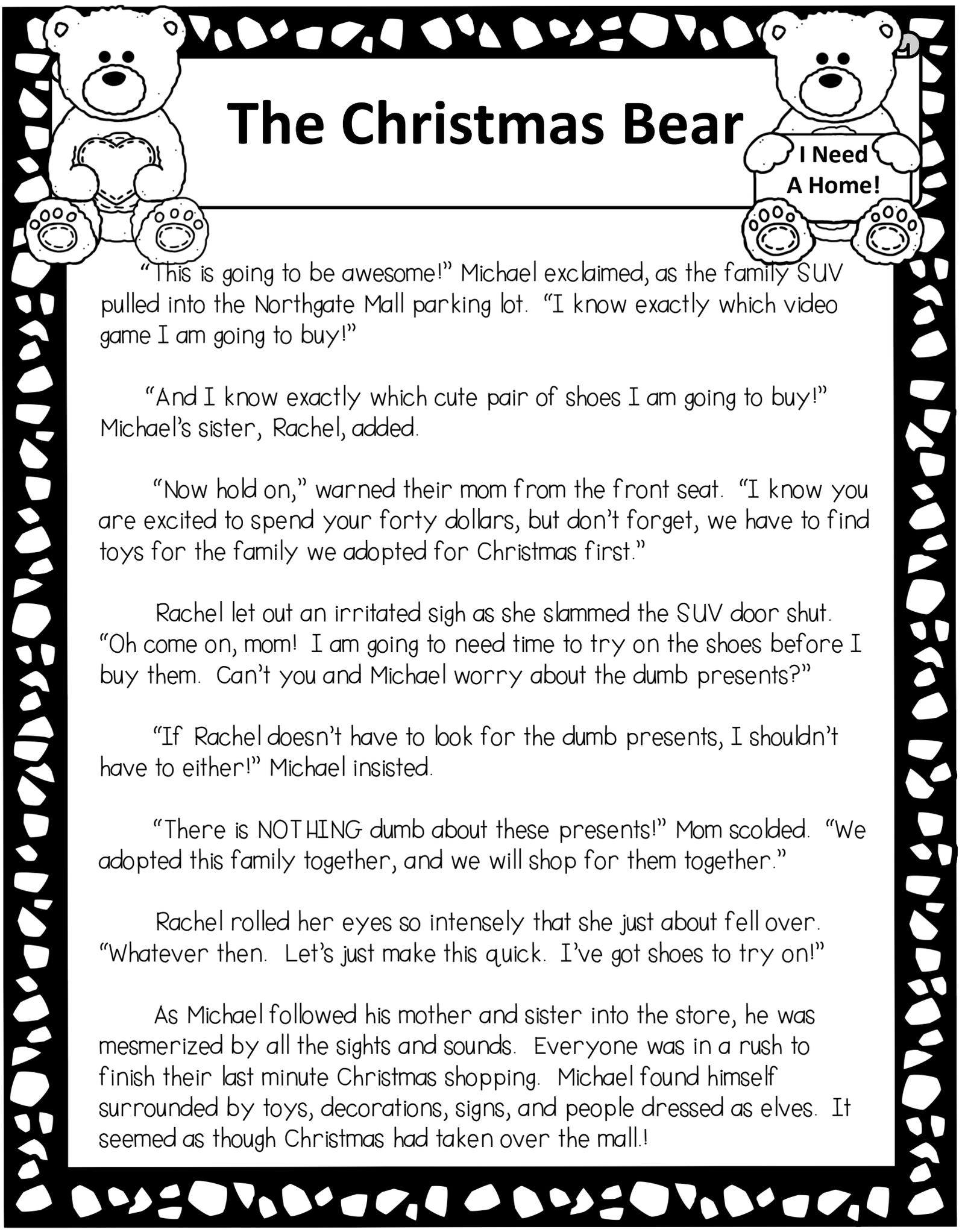
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# The Christmas Bear

“This is going to be awesome!” Michael exclaimed, as the family SUV pulled into the Northgate Mall parking lot. “I know exactly which video game I am going to buy!”

“And I know exactly which cute pair of shoes I am going to buy!” Michael’s sister, Rachel, added.

“Now hold on,” warned their mom from the front seat. “I know you are excited to spend your forty dollars, but don’t forget, we have to find toys for the family we adopted for Christmas first.”

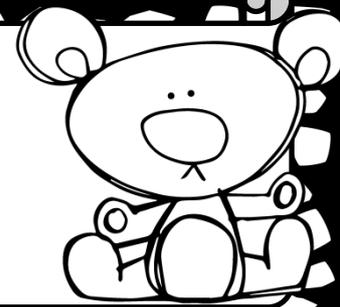
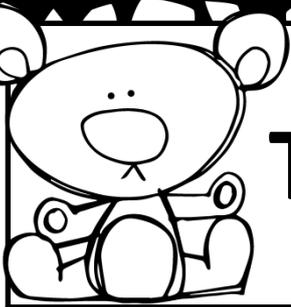
Rachel let out an irritated sigh as she slammed the SUV door shut. “Oh come on, mom! I am going to need time to try on the shoes before I buy them. Can’t you and Michael worry about the dumb presents?”

“If Rachel doesn’t have to look for the dumb presents, I shouldn’t have to either!” Michael insisted.

“There is NOTHING dumb about these presents!” Mom scolded. “We adopted this family together, and we will shop for them together.”

Rachel rolled her eyes so intensely that she just about fell over. “Whatever then. Let’s just make this quick. I’ve got shoes to try on!”

As Michael followed his mother and sister into the store, he was mesmerized by all the sights and sounds. Everyone was in a rush to finish their last minute Christmas shopping. Michael found himself surrounded by toys, decorations, signs, and people dressed as elves. It seemed as though Christmas had taken over the mall!



# The Christmas Bear

“What do you think about this?” Mom asked. She held up a Ninja Turtle for the kids to examine. “Do you think this would be a good gift for the five year old boy on our list?”

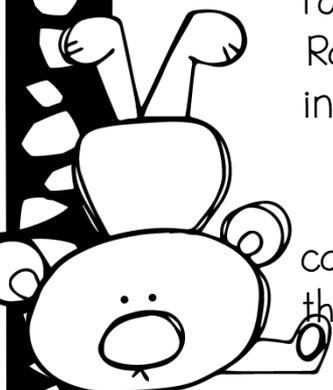
Rachel was texting on her phone. “Sure why not,” she responded without looking up.

“Now come on, Rachel,” Mom said in an irritated tone. “I know you are excited about your shoes, but you should stop a moment to think about this family. The father lost his job, and the mother is very ill. Without our help, there will be no Christmas gifts under their Christmas tree this year. This family is going through a very difficult time, and this is our chance to help.”

Rachel was busy texting, and it was obvious that she had not heard her mother. But Michael was listening to every word. He suddenly felt an ache in his heart. He could not imagine what it would be like to wake up Christmas morning and find no gifts under the tree. Nor could he imagine what it would be like to go without a big turkey dinner on Christmas.

Michael began to help his mom shop with a new sense of purpose. He was determined to ensure that their adopted family would have the best Christmas ever! Long after Rachel left to try on shoes, Michael remained with his mom in search of gifts.

By the time they met Rachel at the checkout till, their cart was full of presents, food, and stocking stuffers for their adopted family. They had budgeted three hundred dollars for the family, and they put every





# The Christmas Bear

penny to good use. Michael was very pleased. Their adopted family was sure to have the best Christmas ever – yet somehow, something seemed to be missing.

“It’s a shame we didn’t see that bear sooner,” Mom said sadly, as she pointed towards a stuffed bear near the till. “I don’t think the little seven year old girl has ever owned a bear.”

Michael could feel his heart ache again. He stared at the forty dollars in his hand very carefully. He could buy his favourite video game, or...

“That’s okay mom,” Michael said with a grin. “I can buy the bear.”

Mom looked surprised. “Are you sure?”

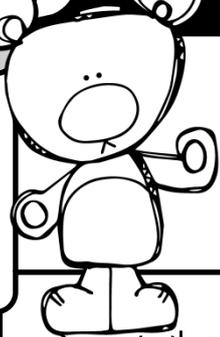
Rachel picked up the bear, and shoved the price tag into Michael’s face. “Are you CRAZY?! This bear costs forty dollars! You will have no money left for yourself!”

“That’s okay,” Michael said. “I have a lot to be thankful for this Christmas. It felt like something was missing in this cart, and I know this teddy bear is just the thing that this family needs.”

“Suit yourself,” Rachel said as she flung her new shoes onto the counter. “I don’t see how your dumb bear is going to make any difference. If I was you, I’d go buy your video game”

Michael shook his head. There was no doubt in his mind that he had made the right choice. He wished his sister could feel, just how good he felt at that moment!

# Think It Over



1) When Michael first arrives at the mall, what was he most excited about?

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2) Michael learns more about the family they adopted for Christmas. What are some of the challenges that their adopted family is experiencing?

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3) After helping his mom shop, their cart is soon filled with gifts and food for the adopted family. Michael decides one more gift is needed. What gift does he buy?

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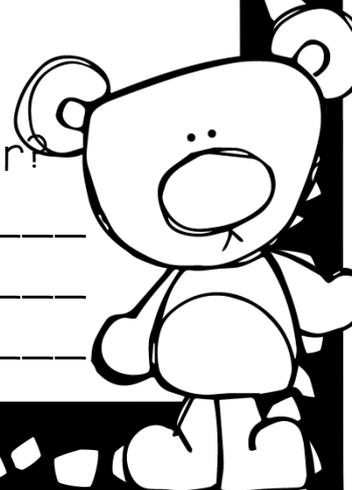
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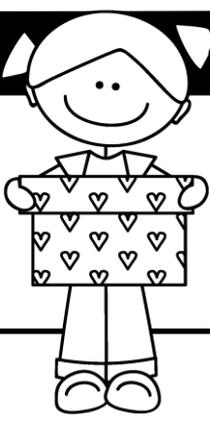
4) Michael uses all of the money he has on the bear for the family. Rachel thinks he is crazy. What virtue does Michael demonstrate, that his sister does not show? Do you think you would spend your money on the bear?

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# The Power Of Hope

Hope means that you want something to happen, and you believe that it could happen. Without hope, our world would be dark and grey. A world without hope, means a world without the chance for improvement.

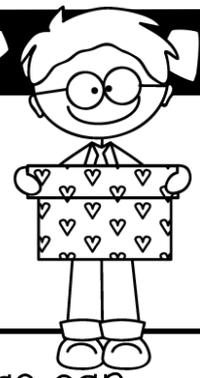
Throughout history, the virtue of hope has played an enormous role in positive changes. Before every invention, every cure, every civil rights movement – hope was present.

Making change in our world takes courage, strength, and determination. But before one can acquire any of these things, one must first BELIEVE that change CAN happen – they must have hope!

As Christians, we are called to bring positive changes to our world. We are driven to help those in need, and search for justice. Every one of us is able to bring hope to others. Sometimes the problems in our world seem large and daunting. Sometimes it seems that nothing we do could be significant enough to make change. But this is not true! We must believe that we can play a role in shaping our world. We must remember that each and every little act of kindness that we show adds up. Together we can change the world – we can share hope with others!



# The Power Of Hope



Bringing hope to others is easy! Anyone of any age can show hope. You do not need to have money to help others. All you need is the ability to see a need for change, and BELIEVE that YOU can play a role in changing it!

During this week, try to think of ways you can show hope. Perhaps you will adopt a family with your school or family, just as Michael did in the story. Perhaps you will donate your time, and help a local charity.

Sometimes, just showing we care can bring hope. You may wish to make Christmas cards for the ones you love. You can also make cards for people in your community. A local hospital or group home would love your donation. Your Christmas cards will bring smiles to the faces of others.

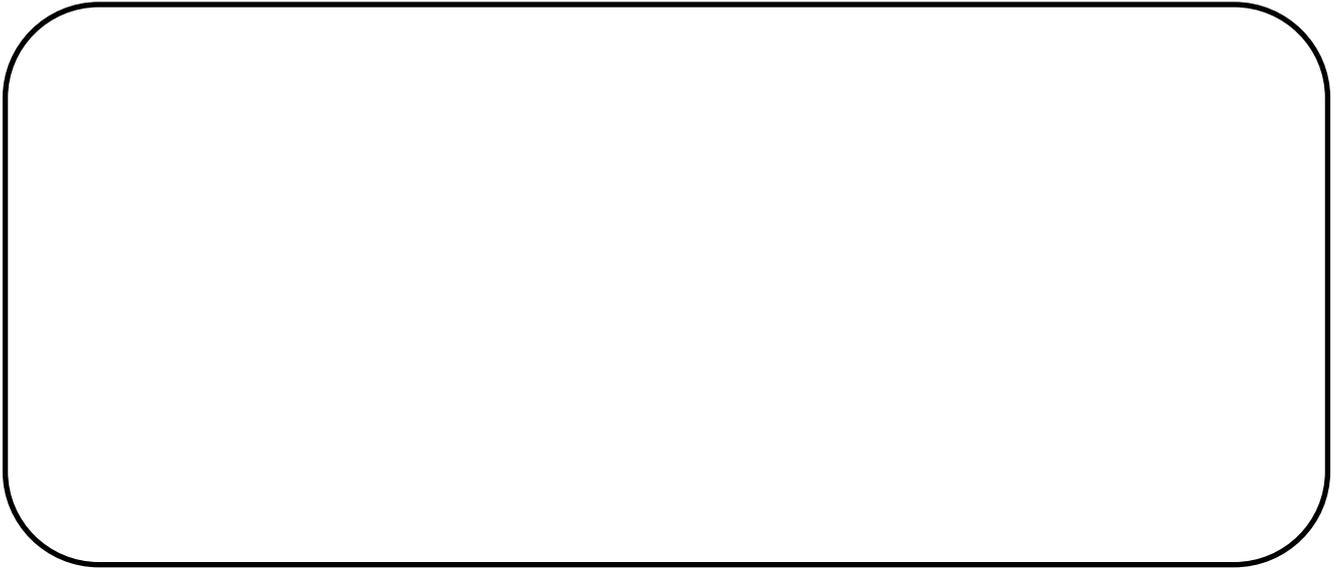
Search for acts of kindness that are needed within your community. Perhaps you could shovel the driveway for your neighbor, or bake cookies for your church.

There are hundreds of ways that you can show hope this Advent season, and all year round. Don't let others make you feel that your contributions are not worth the effort (just as Michael's sister did in the story). These people couldn't be more wrong! You CAN make change – all you need is hope!

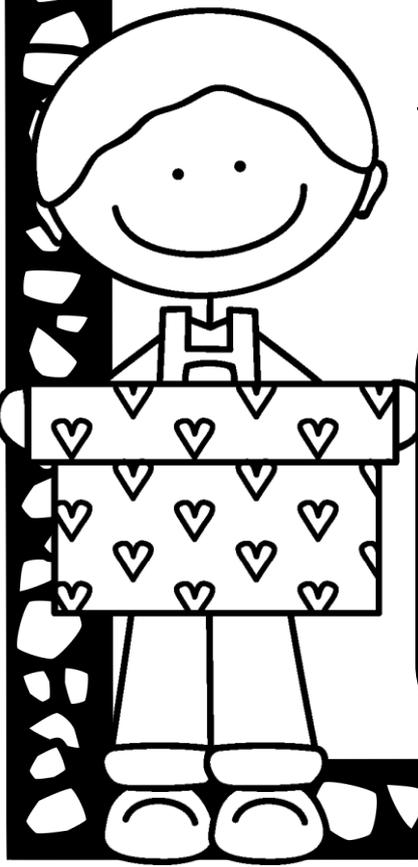
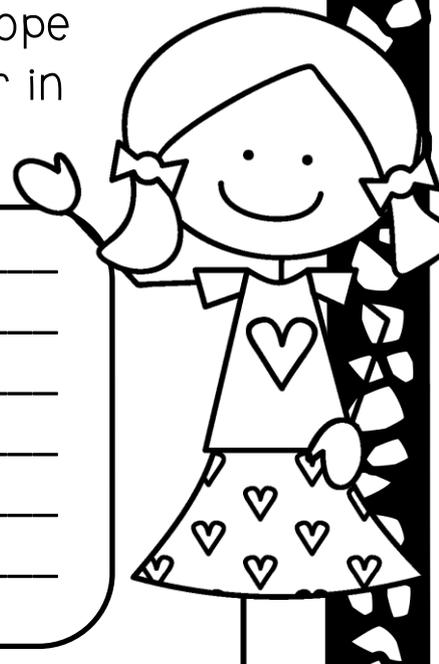


# I Can Share Hope!

In the box below, draw some ways that you can show hope and kindness.



You will get a chance to show hope in many ways during Advent. Choose the first thing that you will do to show hope and kindness. Record your answer in the space below.

A rounded rectangular box containing five horizontal lines for writing an answer.

# Hope Poem

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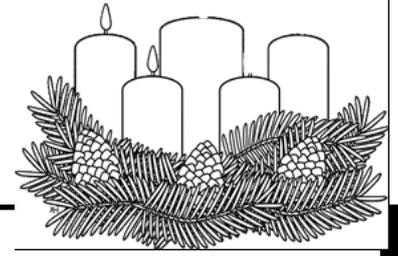
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# Week #2: Peace



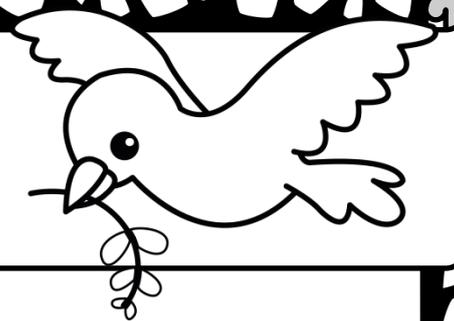
We now begin our second week of Advent! Our second candle is lit on our Advent wreath and we are one week closer to celebrating Jesus' birthday! The theme for this week is Peace.

Jesus was born over two thousand years ago! During this time, people were in search of peace – just as we continue to search for peace today. We have made a lot of progress creating peace for our world, but there is much more to be done! Jesus is called the Prince of Peace. When people heard of his birth, they wanted to see Jesus. They understood that this little baby would bring peace to our world! Today, we follow in Jesus' footsteps. We read our bible, and examine the life that Jesus lived. Our greatest role model of peace is Jesus Christ. During his short time on earth, Jesus showed love and respect for others. He preached about acceptance and forgiveness.

During this week, we will learn about how Jesus brought peace to our world. We will also explore how we are called to bring peace to others, by following in the footsteps of Jesus. The Prince of Peace is our Savior, and our teacher. If we follow his path, we are able to bring peace to our world!



# The Prince Of Peace



## Luke:2 (8-14)

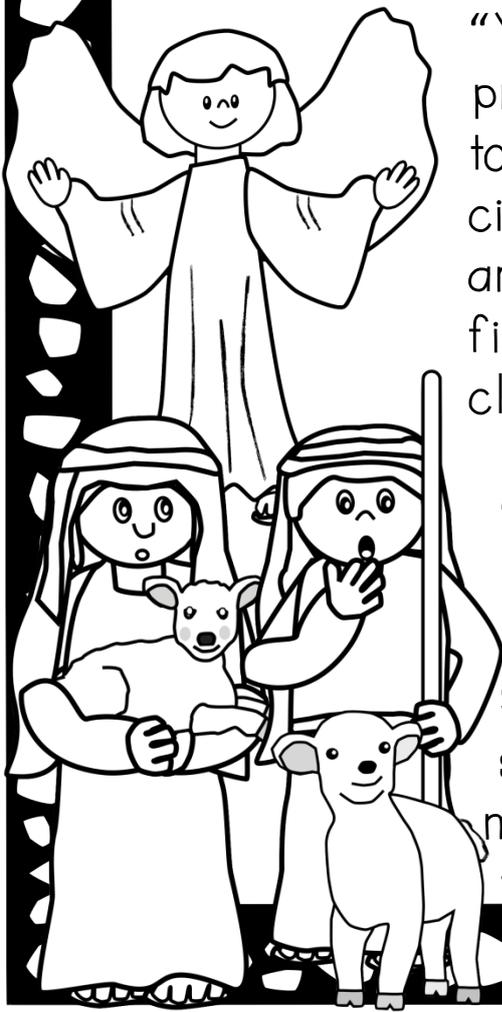
Long ago, a group of shepherds were watching over their flock of sheep. They did this every night, for wolves would commonly come along and try to eat their sheep

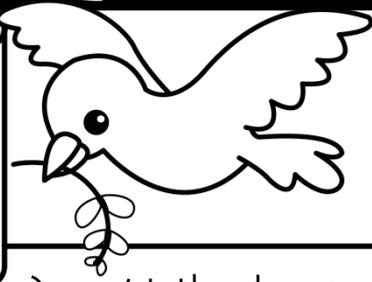
As they were watching over their sheep, a bright light appeared. The shepherds did not understand what was going on, for this light had never appeared before. They were very afraid. They huddled together in fear, and worried for their safety. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared before them and they were filled with surprise and awe.

“You have nothing to fear!” the angel proclaimed. “I have come to share good news to you, and to all the world! This day in David’s city a Savior has been born to you, the Messiah and Lord. Let this be a sign to you that you will find a baby in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes.”

Suddenly, a heavenly voiced proclaimed. “Glory to God in high heaven, and peace on earth to those who follow in God’s ways!”

Soon, the angels went back to heaven. The shepherds were thrilled by this news. They made their way to Bethlehem as quickly as they could!





# Reflection

1) At the beginning of the story, the shepherds are very scared. What frightens them?

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2) When the angel appears, she tells of an amazing birth. Whose birth does the angel announce?

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3) Near the end of this story, a heavenly voice can be heard. The message is started for you below. Complete the rest of this message.

*Glory to God in high heaven,* \_\_\_\_\_

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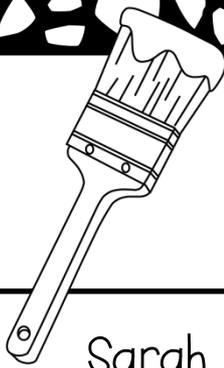
4) The angel proclaims that there will be peace on earth to all those who follow in God's ways. Can you think of ways that we can show peace on earth?

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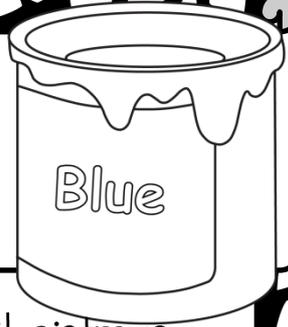
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# Sarah's Plan

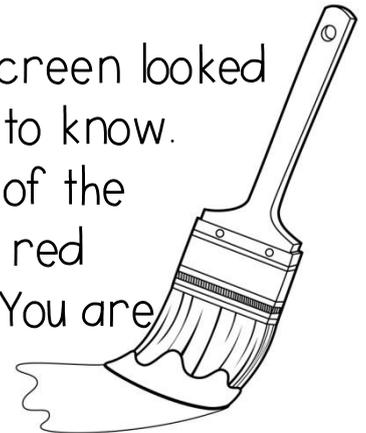


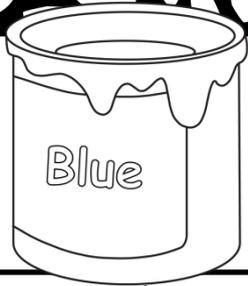
Sarah was excited! It was only five days until Christmas. Sarah was determined to make a Christmas painting for each of her family members. She carefully sketched the image of an elf onto a piece of paper. As she dipped her paintbrush into the green paint, the sound of her mother's voice startled her and she dropped her paintbrush onto the table.

"Oh no!" her mother exclaimed from the living room. "Who would do something like this?"

Sarah quickly made her way into the living room, followed by her father. There she found her mom staring at the TV screen with a look of horror on her face. It did not take long for Sarah to understand the reason for her mother's alarm. On the screen she could see the image of their town's mosque. Sarah passed by this mosque every day on her way to school. She had also visited the mosque before with her friend, Aleah, who attended services there.

The trouble was that the mosque on the screen looked much different than the mosque she had come to know. The beautiful blue paint that covered the walls of the building, was now covered with large words in red paint. The words read: "Get out of our town! You are not welcome here!"





# Sarah's Plan

Sarah was puzzled. "Why on earth would someone write that?" she asked.

Sarah's father looked at her the way he always did when he felt he needed to shelter her from the bad things of the world. "Maybe you should go upstairs for a while Sarah, mom and I will call you down in a moment."

"I don't want to go upstairs!" Sarah insisted. "I want to watch the news with you and mom."

Sarah's mother and father exchanged glances. "We may never understand why someone would do this, Sarah," her mom explained. "It seems as though someone in this community is lashing out against the Muslims. There is no reason for this type of hate, we can only hope that God will change their hearts."

After hearing this, Sarah became very quiet. She thought carefully about what her mother had said. She had always understood that she was a Christian and her friend, Aleah, was a Muslim. Their difference in faith, had never been a problem. But Sarah could remember a time when Aleah said that some people in the community did not accept her faith the same way Sarah did. As Sarah stopped to think, a smile crossed her face. She had a plan. She knew just what to do!



The page is framed by a decorative border consisting of a black outer line with white, irregular, stone-like shapes inside. At the top left and right corners, there are illustrations of paintbrushes. On the left side, a scroll is partially visible.

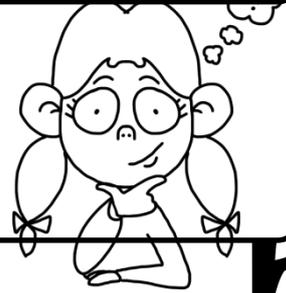
# Sarah's Plan

Sarah quickly made her way to the kitchen. She assembled a beautiful poster using her paints. It did not take Sarah long to finish. She had a new mission! Sarah quickly made her way to the garage where she found her father's paint. She took a bucket of paint and primer, then made her way to the mosque.

When Sarah arrived, she could see the television crews around the building. A journalist was speaking into a camera. Sarah also saw her friend Aleah standing with her father, and a group of others who had gathered at the mosque. Sarah smiled at Aleah, but she did not say a word. Instead, she opened the door to the mosque and hung her poster in the window. Her poster was colorful. It displayed a beautiful picture of Sarah with her arm around Aleah's shoulder. Under the picture Sarah had written: "This IS your town, and you will ALWAYS be welcome here!"

Next, Sarah got to work. Without saying a word to anyone, she began to cover the rude, red words with paint primer. Then she opened her blue paint, and prepared to paint the wall. All those who had gathered at the mosque watched Sarah in amazement. Soon, the journalist stopped speaking, and the crowd became very quiet. The next thing Sarah knew, the others began to join her! Everyone in the crowd grabbed a paint brush and began painting over the words. Sarah was thrilled! Within an hour, almost the entire town had come to join her – including her parents! By supper time, the major story of the day was no longer the crude words written on the wall, but the act of everyone helping to cover these words with paint. It was an act of peace that all began with a little girl named Sarah!

# Think It Over



1) Something terrible has happened to the mosque in Sarah's town in this story. What has happened?

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2) Sarah is confused by this act of hate. Sarah and Aleah are friends. Sarah is a Christian, and Aleah is a Muslim. Have their differences in faith been a problem before?

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3) Sarah makes a plan. What is her plan?

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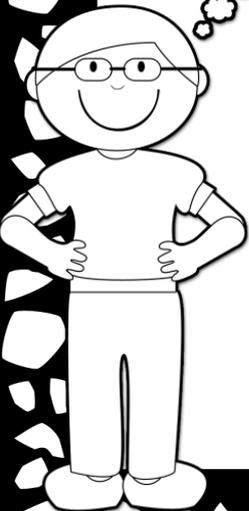
4) What happens when Sarah begins painting the mosque? Why do you suppose the others joined Sarah? Do you think you would do, what Sarah did?

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# Peace For All

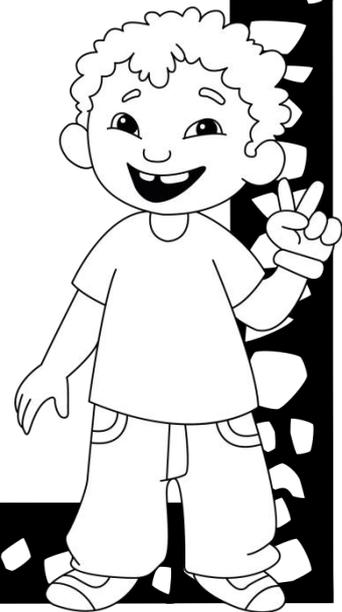


Peace means freedom from war and hate. Peace is a state of harmony where everyone is free to be themselves, without fear of persecution.

Unfortunately, our world has never known complete peace. At all times of recorded history, there have been wars and civil disturbances. Our world history has included discrimination against others, and poor treatment of groups and individuals.

But don't let our history discourage you – let it encourage you! When Jesus came to earth he taught the world of a new kind of peace. He sent the message that God in heaven did not favor people with money and power, but rather people who showed love. Jesus shared the message that we are to treat others fairly, we are not to discriminate, and that we are to share our wealth and riches with the world. Believe it or not, this was a very new concept at the time!

It is true that we have never known world peace – but we have had many powerful peacekeepers walk this earth. Some of these people include: Mother Theresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Malala Yousafzai. Just to name a few!



# Peace For All

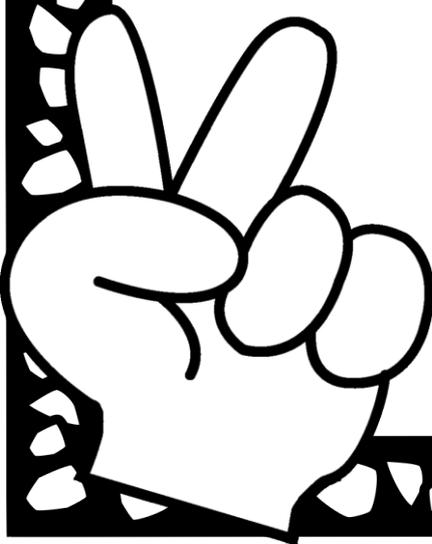


All of these individuals have demonstrated peace, and you can too! It does not matter how old you are, or where you live – EVERYONE is able to show peace!

During Advent, and all year round, try to search for ways to show peace. In the story, “Sarah’s Plan,” the main character saw an act of hate and decided to fight it with an act of peace. In your community, you may witness a group or an individual who is being treated poorly. If you do, stand up for what is right. It may not be easy, but you will be happy you did!

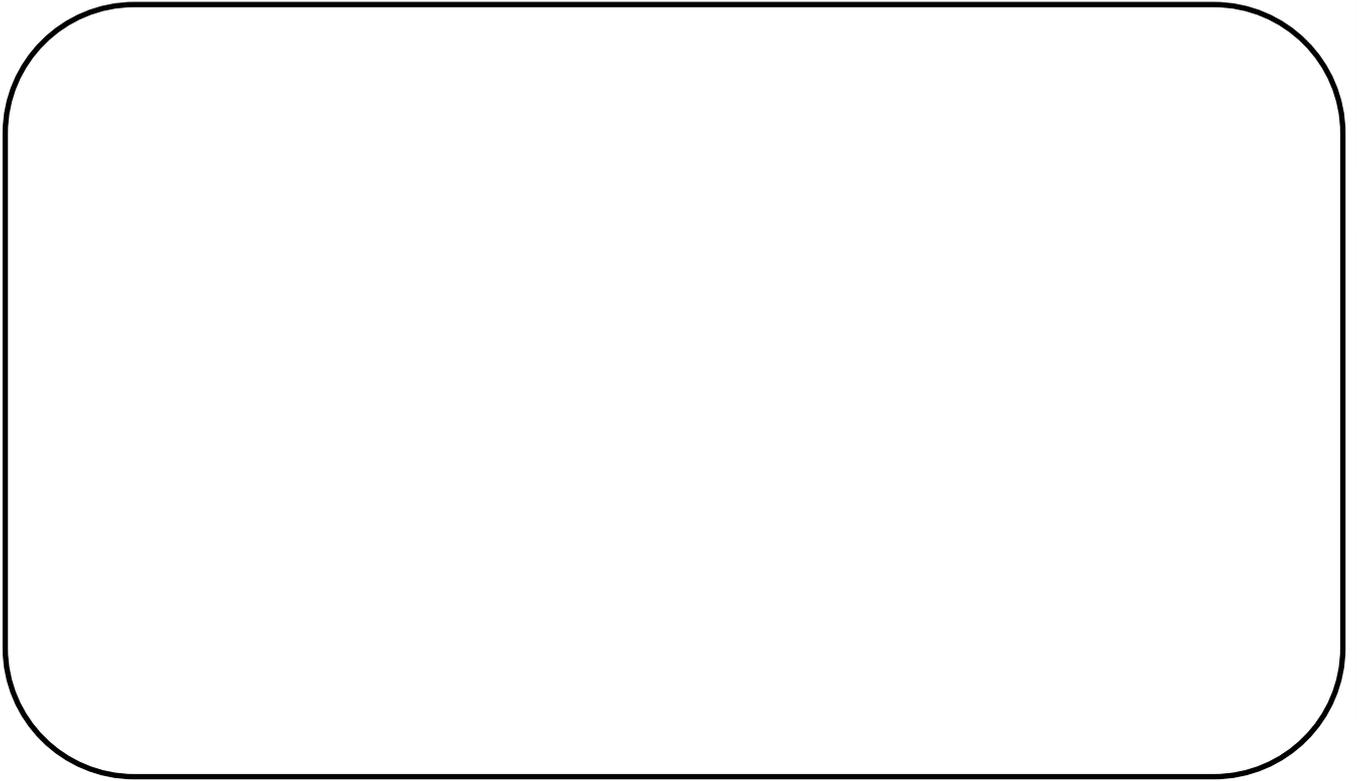
There are many ways that you can show peace. Always try to talk through conflict with your friends. When you do something wrong – be sure to apologize and make things right. Make peacekeeping your goal! Be an advocate for kindness and respect. Be sure to treat everyone the way you want to be treated. When you do this, you are a role model to others on how to show peace, just as Jesus did for us!

During this Advent season, you will have lots of chances to show peace. Always be on the look out for conflict. When you are unable to work out the conflict on your own, ask an adult for help. Together we can all show peace!



# I Am A Peacekeeper!

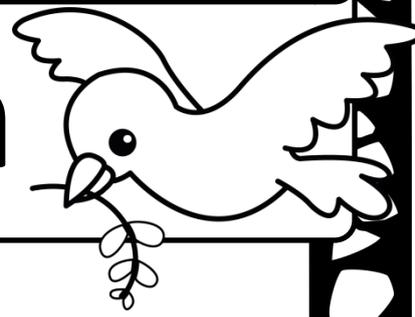
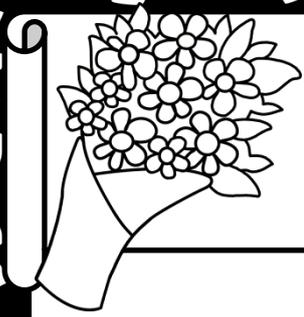
In the box below, draw some ways that you can show peace.



Chose one way that you can show peace. Write about it in the space provided below.

A writing area consisting of five horizontal lines within a rounded rectangular border.

# Peace Poem



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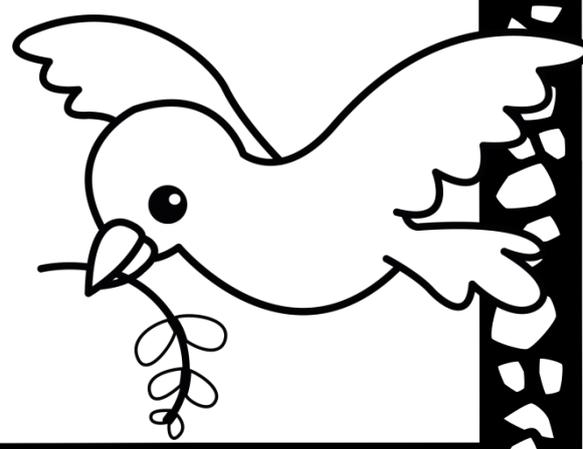
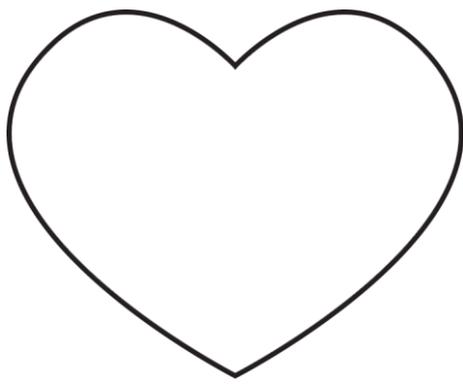
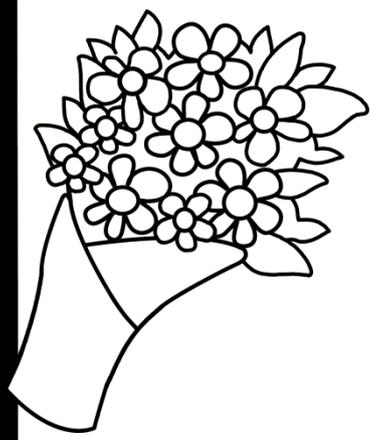
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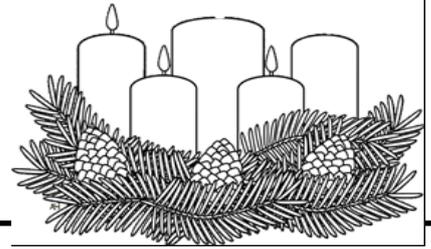
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# Week #3: Joy



We have now entered the third week of Advent! The third candle is lit on our Advent wreath, and we are half-way through Advent – soon we will be celebrating the birth of Jesus! We will light the pink candle on our wreath this week – the candle of Joy!

Many years ago, Jesus brought joy to the world. You have probably heard of the famous Christmas carol, “Joy to the World.” The lyrics of this song explain how the world rejoiced when Jesus came into our world. Suddenly, earth was filled with hope and promise. Everyone wanted to see the Christ child who was born in a manger. Most kings are born in a castle, surrounded by riches and royalty. Jesus is the King of Kings. He had the most unlikely of births. Throughout his life, Jesus expressed how our riches and wealth mean nothing in the eyes of God. He made it clear, that our true riches include our faith in God, and the love we share in our lives. Jesus lived what he preached. As the most important child to be born in history, he was born in a manger amongst animals and hay – not riches.

This week, we will learn more about the joy Jesus brought to our world. We will also learn how we can share joy with others.

A cartoon illustration of a girl with a large bow in her hair, wearing a dress with a bow at the bottom. She is holding a rectangular sign.

**Joy To The  
World!**

# Jesus Brings Joy



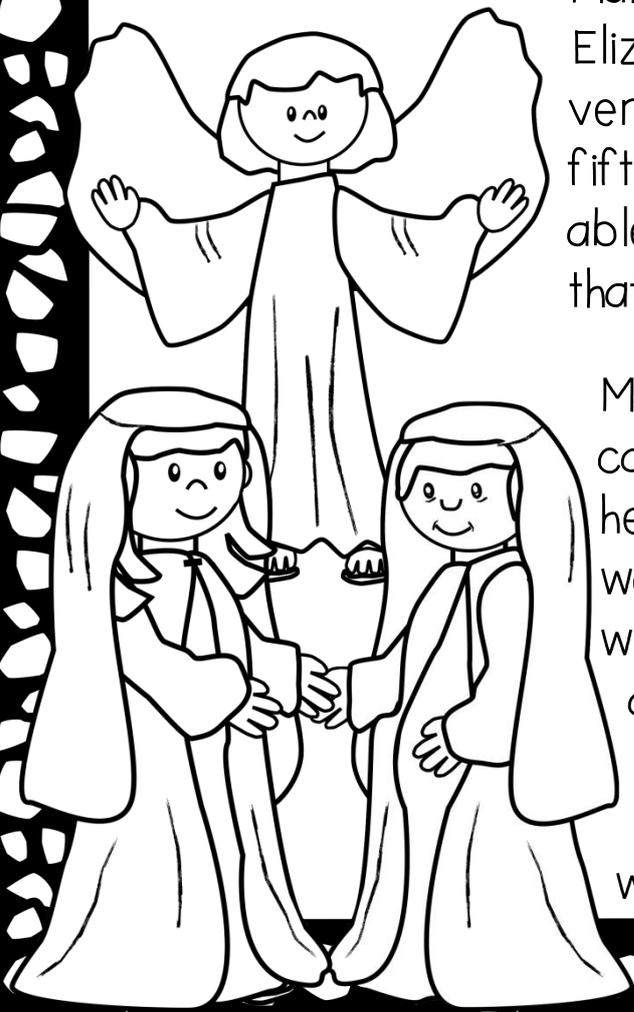
## Luke 1: 36-45

Long ago, an angel visited Mary to share with her that she would give birth to Jesus Christ. Mary was thrilled, as she prepared to take on this great task.

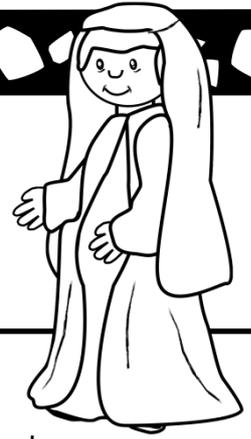
“Know this,” said the angel. “Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age. It was thought that she would never have a child, but she is now six months pregnant. For nothing is impossible through God!”

Mary was amazed to hear this news! Mary knew that her older relative, Elizabeth, wanted to have a child for a very long time. Since Elizabeth was in her fifties, it was not believed she would be able to have children. Mary was happy that God granted this wish for Elizabeth!

Mary rushed to Elizabeth’s home and called out her name. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s voice, the child in her womb leapt with joy. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Together, Mary and Elizabeth praised God. They were filled with joy, and rejoiced, for God granted them a precious gift. Anything was possible through God!



# Reflection



1) Mary is visited by an angel. After finding out that she will be the mother of Jesus Christ, Mary finds out some wonderful news about her relative Elizabeth. What is this news?

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2) Why is this news considered to be a miracle?

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3) Mary rushes to see Elizabeth. When she greets her, what does the baby do in Elizabeth's womb? Why do you think this would happen when Elizabeth hears Mary's greeting?

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4) At the end of the story, Mary and Elizabeth rejoice, saying "anything is possible through God." What do you think they meant by this?

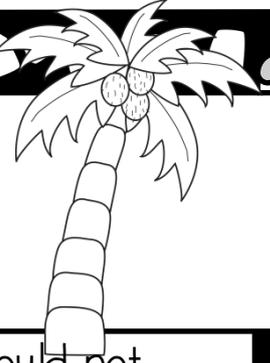
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# Aloha Christmas

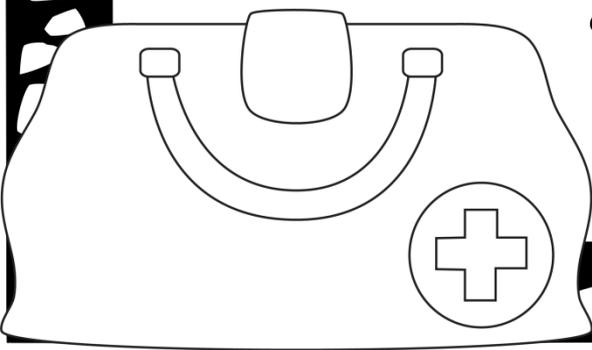


Christmas was only two weeks away, but Amanda could not bring herself to smile. She laid across her bed on her stomach and shifted through a package of Hawaii pamphlets. Her eyes scanned the beautiful ocean scenery, and the amazing resort features. When she lifted an advertisement about sea turtles, her eyes immediately filled with tears. Suddenly, there was a knock on her bedroom door.

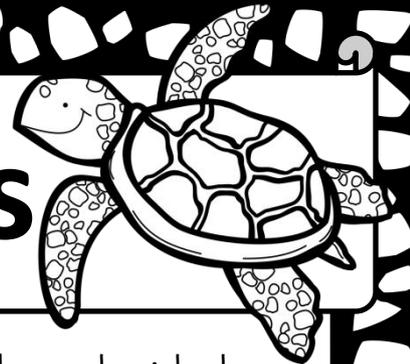
“Amanda? Are you okay in there?” her mother’s voice sounded through the door. Before Amanda could answer, her mom opened the door. “Oh, Amanda!” Her mother crossed the room to Amanda’s bed and held her daughter in her arms.

“It’s just not fair!” Amanda cried, choking back tears. “It was going to be the best vacation ever! The doctor said she was in remission – I thought this whole thing was over!”

Amanda’s mother did not know what to say, so she continued to rock her daughter back and forth and rub her back. Her mother knew just as well as anyone that there was nothing she could say to make sense of the situation. Amanda’s family had been planning a Hawaii vacation with the Meyers’ family for months. Amanda Bennett and Alicia Meyers had been best friends since kindergarten. So, three years earlier, when Alicia was first diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, called Leukemia, Amanda remained by her friend’s side. After rounds of chemo-therapy, Alicia was declared to be in remission. This



# Aloha Christmas



wonderful news had filled both families with hope. They decided that a Christmas family vacation would be the perfect way to celebrate Alicia's recovery. For months, the Bennett and Meyers' families, planned the perfect Hawaii get away. Alicia and Amanda spent hours deciding which activities they would enjoy the most. Without a doubt, their number one choice was scuba diving. The girls desperately wanted to see a sea turtle up close, and they had been researching all types of interesting facts about the amazing creatures every chance they got.

But all these dreams had come to an end, just two days earlier. Amanda had been looking at sea turtles online, when they received a phone call from the Meyers' saying that Alicia had been rushed to the hospital. The doctors had declared that Alicia was much too sick once again to travel, and she would have to spend Christmas in the hospital.

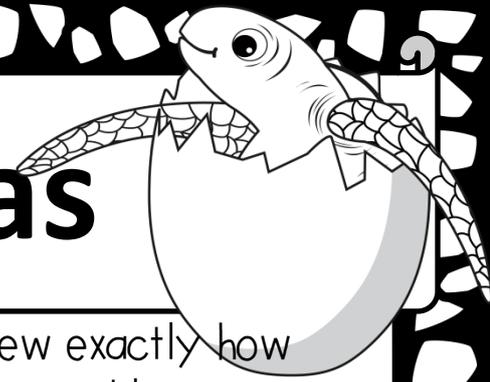
"We were going to scuba dive with the sea turtles, mom!" Amanda said, as tears streaked down her face. "Now, Alicia has to spend Christmas in a smelly hospital. It's just not fair!"

"I know," her mother agreed as her eyes teemed with tears. "This is not what we had planned for our Christmas this year. But we have to make the best of the situation. We have to be strong for Alicia."

After her mom had left, Amanda looked again at her Hawaii pamphlets. She realized that her mother was



# Aloha Christmas



right. She had to be strong for Alicia, and she knew exactly how she could make the best of their situation. Amanda quickly got on the phone and contacted the hospital. Next, she called up all her friends. She had a plan, and she had only two weeks to put it into action!

The two weeks went by quickly, and before Amanda knew it, Christmas Eve had arrived. The Bennett's packed their car with Christmas gifts and drove to the local hospital. Amanda was the first one to arrive at Alicia's room. She was pleased to see Alicia was already in her wheel chair. Alicia's mom greeted Amanda with a smile, and winked at her in a knowing way.

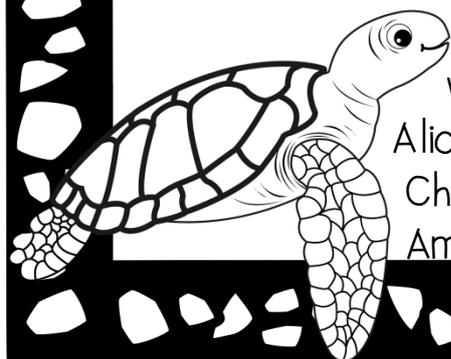
"Merry Christmas, Alicia!" Amanda said, with a bright smile.  
"Merry Christmas, Amanda" Alicia responded.

Amanda took hold of Alicia's wheel chair and began pushing her faster and faster down the hall. Alicia laughed aloud. When Amanda reached the recreation room, she stopped and swung open the door. Inside, the room was full of paper palm trees and beautiful Hawaii decorations – including a giant sea turtle! All of Alicia's classmates and teachers were gathered together with big smiles on their faces. "Merry Christmas, Alicia!" they exclaimed.

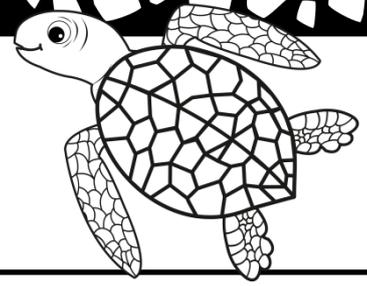
"What is all this?" Alicia asked with surprise.

"We couldn't bring you to Hawaii, so I thought we would bring Hawaii to you!" said Amanda.

Alicia's eyes filled with tears of joy. "This is the best Christmas gift I have ever received! Thank you Amanda! Thank you everyone!"



# Think It Over



1) After Alicia was declared to be in remission of Leukemia, the Meyers' and Bennett families decide to plan a trip to Hawaii. What were the girls looking forward to the most?

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2) Amanda and Alicia's Hawaii vacation is put on hold. What happened?

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3) Amanda comes up with a plan to make Alicia's Christmas special inside the hospital. What does she do?

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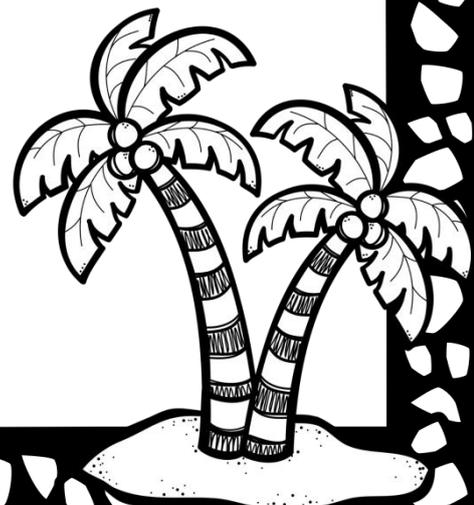
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4) At the end of the story, Alicia says "This is the best Christmas gift I have ever received." What do you think she meant by this?

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# Joy To The World!



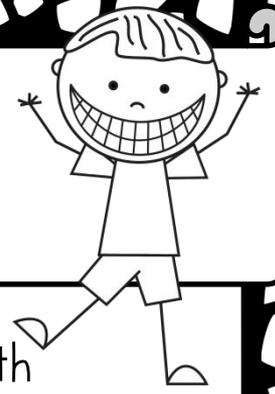
Joy is a very powerful emotion. Joy is a feeling of intense happiness and pleasure. If you have ever felt a feeling of delight that you felt was too strong to be described as happiness, chances are you were feeling joy!

Our world has certainly felt strong moments of joy. We have celebrated many freedoms and acts of justice around the world. However, the biggest act of joy that has ever reached our world occurred over two thousand years ago. This was the day that our Savior, Jesus Christ, was born. Joy filled the hearts of many at the news of His birth! People around the world were filled with hope. They recognized that this baby boy, the Son of God, would lead our world towards peace and love. Just imagine the feeling of joy that spread across our wonderful planet!

Today, joy continues to be a very powerful virtue. The act of sharing joy with others is a positive gesture. Each and every day, people around the world share in acts of joy. Not all of these actions make it on the news, or become a known part of our world history, but they are powerful just the same. During this Advent season, and all year round, you have the opportunity to share joy!



# Joy To The World!

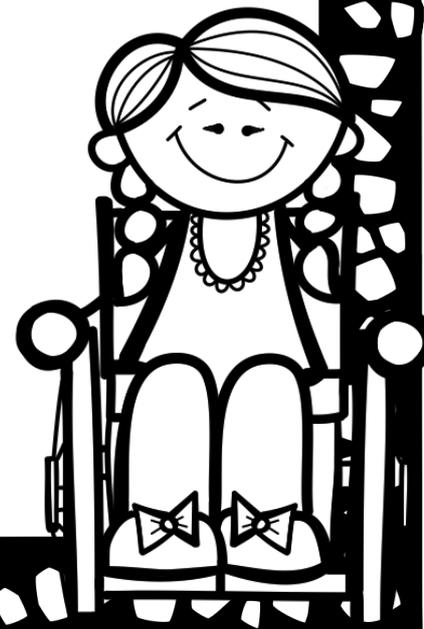


There are many ways that you can share joy with others. Remember, it is important that each and every person on this earth feels loved and appreciated.

You may wish to write notes to all those special people in your life. Be sure to thank them for those things that they do for you. Write a note to your classmates – let them know just how special they are, and what you admire about them.

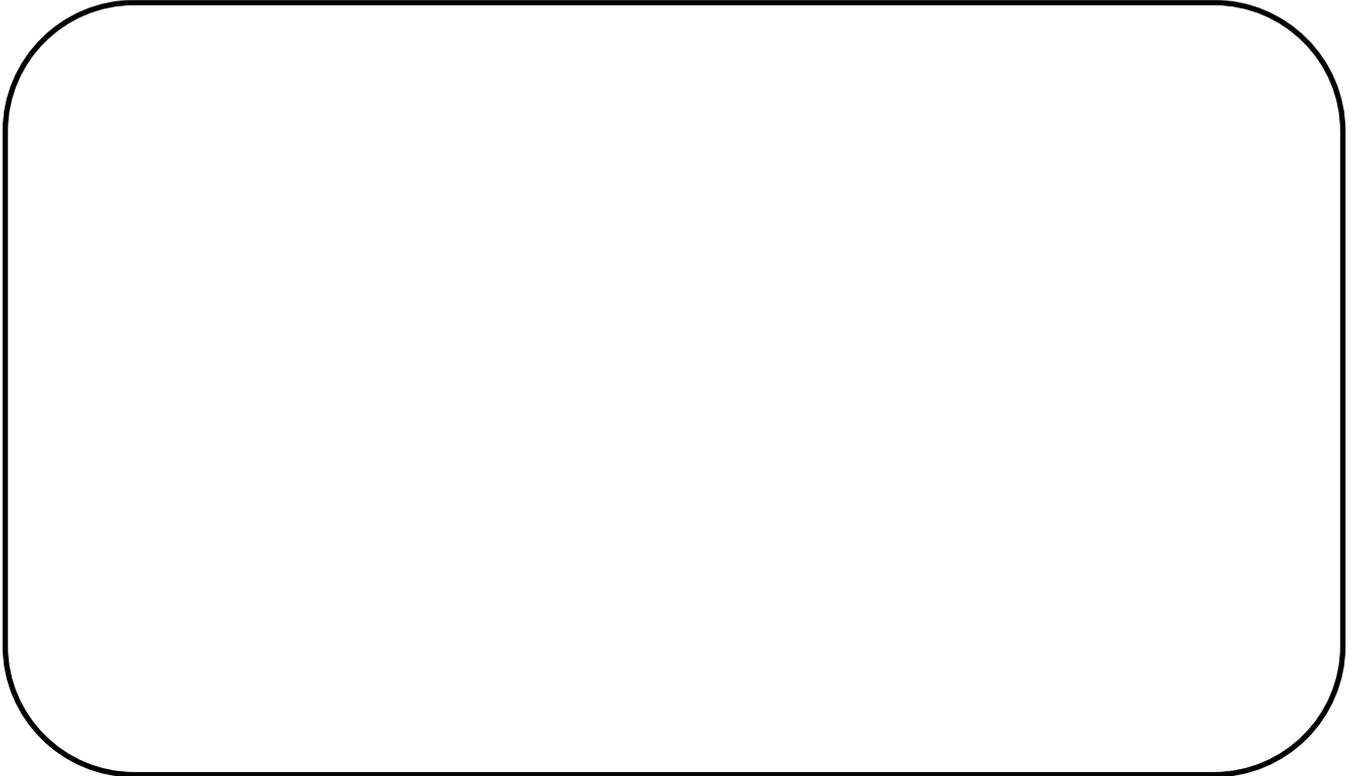
Random acts of kindness is one of the best ways to share joy. Look around your neighborhood. Search for ways that you can show kindness to others. Perhaps you could send a box of chocolates to people within your community. Perhaps you could help with an event, or surprise your neighbor by helping them with a task! Always keep your eyes and your heart open – if you do, you will find ways to share joy with others.

In the story, "Aloha Christmas," Amanda is able to spread joy, even during a difficult situation. Remember, we all face tough times in our lives, but joy is always waiting around the corner. Sometimes, it is up to us to find it and make it happen!



# I Have Joy To Share!

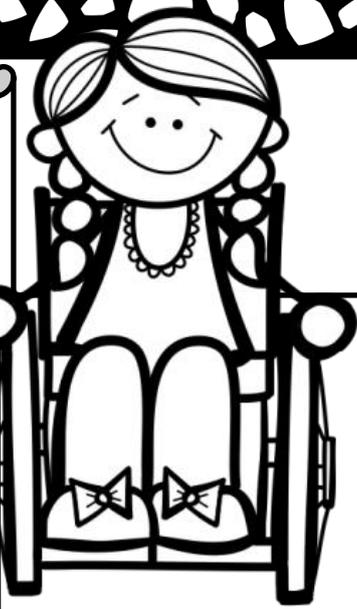
In the box below, draw some ways that you can show joy.



Chose one way that you can show joy.  
Write about it in the space provided  
below.



# Joy Poem



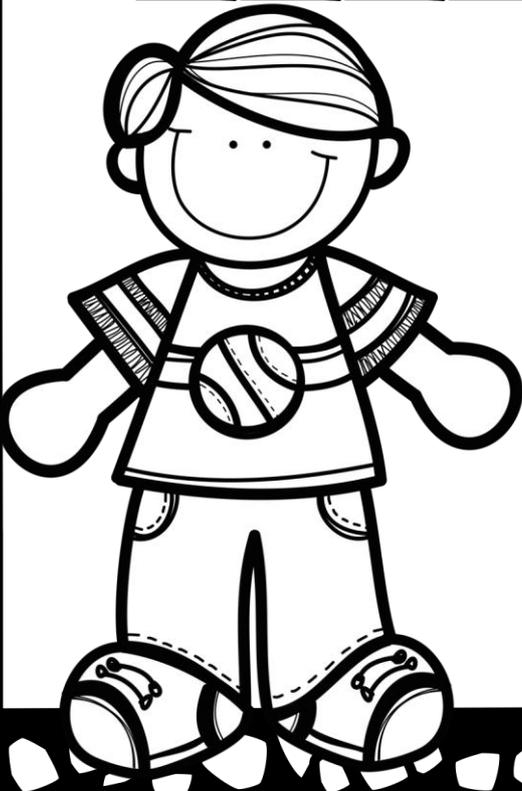
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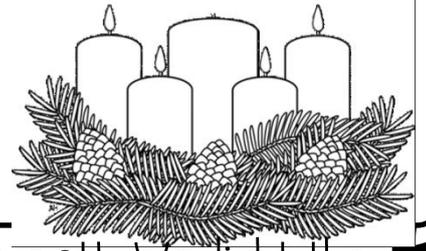
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# Week #4: Love



It is now the fourth and final week of Advent! We light the final purple candle on our wreath. The end of Advent is near, and we will soon celebrate Jesus' birthday! The theme for this week is Love.

The biggest act of love ever known on our earth is when God sent his son, Jesus, to us. He did this knowing that his son would one day suffer and die on a cross for all of our sins. God's love for us is never-ending. We can always turn to God for strength - for he will always be there for us. When Jesus was born the world rejoiced! This little baby boy spread love around our world. Jesus would share a powerful message to all those who would listen during His time on earth. He made it known, that we would one day be judged on how we treat others. We are all called to love one another, regardless of race, gender, wealth, religion, or appearance.

This week we will explore the theme of love. During this time, we will learn more about God's love for us. We will also explore ways that we can share love with others. As we enter our final week of Advent, we prepare our hearts. Our journey is almost over!



# God Is With Us



Many years ago, Joseph found out that the woman he was about to marry was going to have a baby. This news surprised Joseph, because Mary and Joseph had not yet prepared to have a child. So Joseph decided it was best to leave Mary.

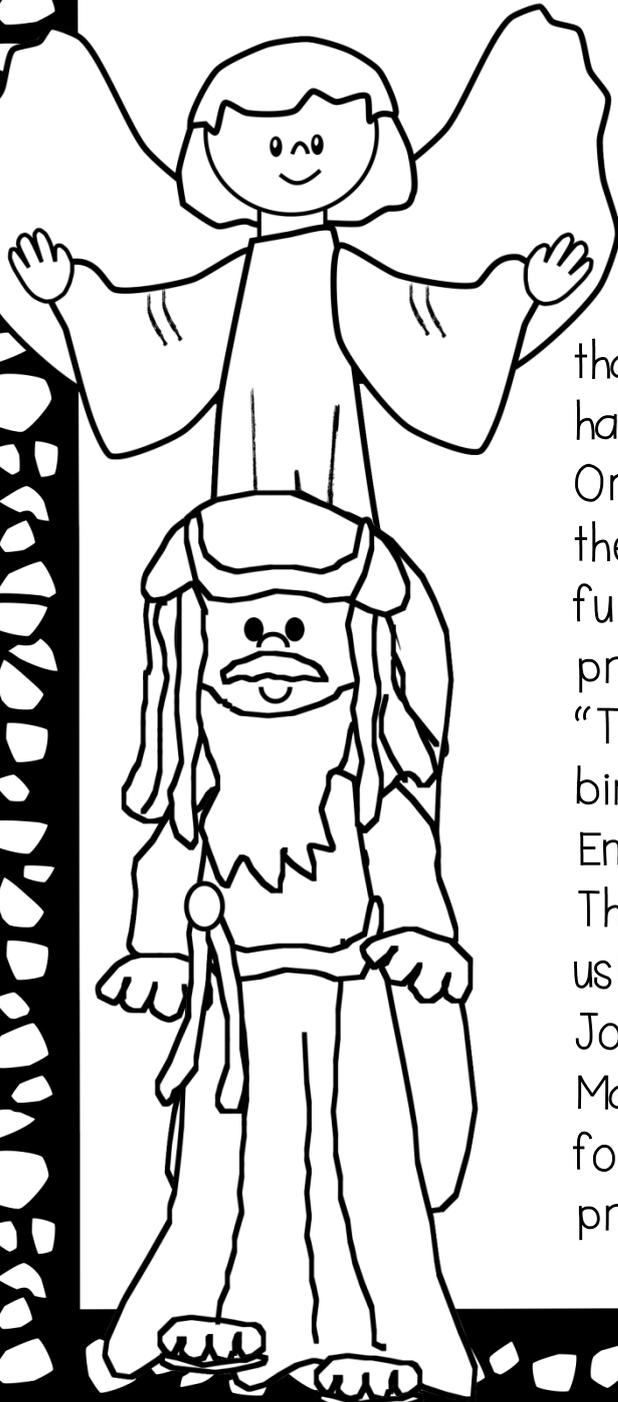
As he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared.

“Joseph, son of David, have no fear taking Mary to be your wife” said the angel. “It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this child. She will have a son and you will name him Jesus. One day he will save his people from their sins. All of this has happened to fulfill what the Lord said through the prophet:

“The virgin shall be with a child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel.”

The name Emmanuel means “God is with us!”

Joseph put his faith in God. He took Mary into his home as his wife. He followed the instructions of the angel and prepared to call his son Jesus.



# Reflection



- 1) After finding out that Mary is pregnant, Joseph decides it is best that he divorces Mary quietly. Suddenly an angel appears. She explains how Mary became pregnant with a child. How did this occur?

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- 2) Joseph is told to name his son Jesus. The angel explains that his son will be called "Emmanuel." What does this word mean?

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- 3) Joseph put his trust in God, and took Mary to be his wife. Together, they named their child Jesus, just as the angel said. The angel told Joseph, "one day he will save his people from their sins." What did the angel mean by this? How is this an act of love?

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# An Unexpected Friend

When Greg finally made it home from school, he was not in a good mood. He swung his backpack across the room, threw off his coat, and stomped up the stairs to his bedroom. Greg was relieved to see his bed. With a quick, unceremonious flop, he landed on top of his mattress and let out a sigh. Now that he was in the safety of his own room, he could finally let the tears fall, that had been burning in his eyes all day.

“Let me guess,” Greg’s mom said, suddenly appearing at his door. “Jeffery Dane is up to his old tricks again?”

“You got that right!” Greg said, as he struggled into a sitting position. “Today I missed a pass when we were playing football. Jeff told me to stop putting grease on my hands. Everyone was laughing at me. To make matters worse – they are all calling me Greasy Fingers Greg now! It’s hopeless mom! I can’t stand it anymore. I am glad Christmas holidays are coming. At least I won’t have to look at his dumb face anymore! If he calls me one more name, I’m...I’m going to hit him!”

“No you’re not Greg!” Mom stated firmly. “Hitting Jeffery will not fix anything. It will only make it worse. By hitting him, you will let him know just how bothered you are by all of this. He will probably bother you more, not less.”

“Well I am running out of ideas mom!” Greg said with exasperation. “Two years ago we



# An Unexpected Friend

were best friends. But now that he is in with the 'cool' kids he won't even give me the time of day!"

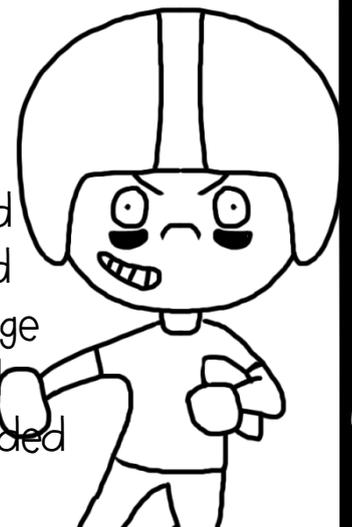
"You have every reason to be frustrated," mom said calmly. "But I don't think Jeffery is feeling nearly as cool as you think he is. I suspect that these so called 'cool' kids you are talking about don't always treat him so great. His parents just got a divorce, and I don't think Jeffery is handling it so well, Greg. Believe it or not, Jeffery is really struggling right now. What he really needs is a friend."

"A friend??" exclaimed Greg. "He has more friends now than anyone I know! Too many to include me."

Greg's mom smiled. "You're a smart kid Greg. Just think about it for a while."

After his mom had left, Greg found himself thinking. Was his mom crazy? Or did she have a point? Could he really put an end to all this by being NICE to Jeff?

The next day, Greg was not surprised to see the boys playing football when he arrived at school. A part of him didn't want to join, but he was determined not to let Jeff ruin his fun. As he walked up to the group, he watched Jeff charge forward to make a catch. The football bounced off the tip of his fingers and landed in the mud.



# An Unexpected Friend

“Smooth move, Jeff!” Chris Harken said sarcastically. “I think my baby sister could have caught that!”

“Yeah!” the others agreed. “Maybe you should go back to the little leagues!”

Everyone began to laugh. Jeff kicked at the mud, and kept his head down. It was obvious to Greg that Jeff was upset.

“Big deal!” Greg said suddenly, before he could stop himself. “You’re not exactly the best player either Chris. Yesterday you missed two touchdown passes and nearly cost your team the game. Let’s stop the blaming and get on with the game, shall we?”

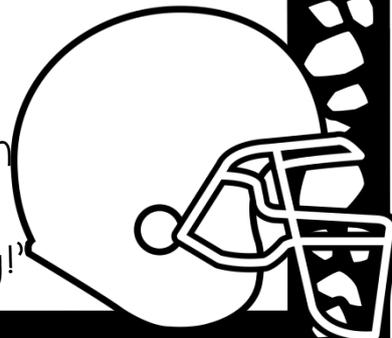
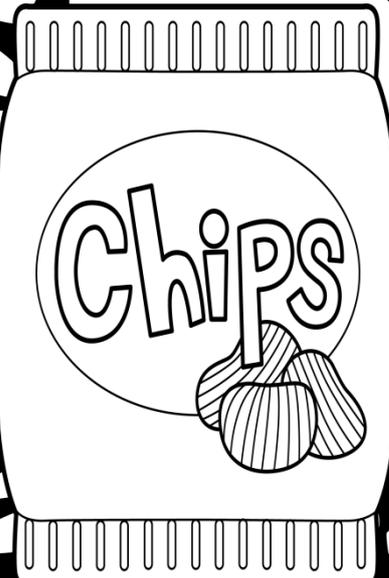
Everyone froze and stared at Greg. The group was shocked that he would stand up to Chris like that. No one was more surprised than Greg himself! After an awkward silence the group began playing again.

After the game, Greg was surprised to see Jeff come towards him.

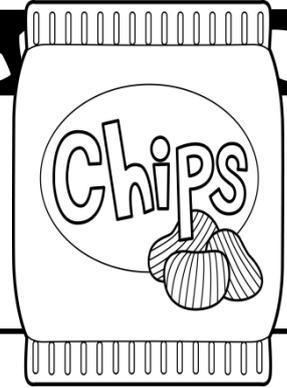
“That was pretty cool of you to stand up to Chris like that, Greg” Jeff said.

“Ah, it was no big deal. You hungry? I got chips?” Greg said, offering his open bag to Jeff.

“Sounds cool,” said Jeff. “Thanks Greg!”



# Think It Over



1) When Greg comes home from school he is very upset. What is bothering him?

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2) The next day, Greg finds himself standing up to one of the bullies – Chris. Do you think it was easy for Greg to point out how unfair Chris was being to Jeff? Why or why not?

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3) At the end of the story, Jeff says thank you to Greg after he is offered some chips. Do you get the impression that Jeff may be grateful for more than just the chips? Explain your answer.

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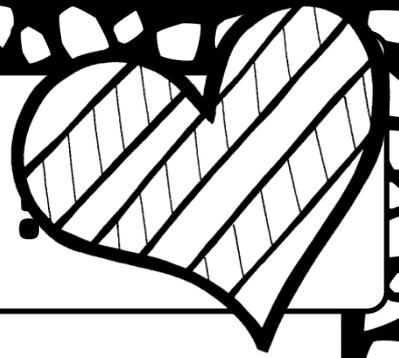
4) In the end, Greg is able to make things right with Jeff by being kind to him. Has this ever happened to you?

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# Love Is Powerful!



Many believe that Love is the most powerful virtue of all. Love is defined as an intense feeling of affection and devotion. All people, young and old, are able to express love. Our world would be a much different place, if love did not exist.

All of Jesus' teaching are centered on the importance of love. We are all called to love one another and treat one another with respect. Jesus was the first teacher to demonstrate the importance of love in our world. Here are three examples of scripture that speak about love.

1) "Do to others as you would have them do to you." – Luke 6:31

2) "The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." – Mark 12:31

3) "But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked." – Luke 6:35

All of these passages act as reminders that we are called to love another.



# Love Is Powerful!



There are many ways that you can show love this Advent season, and all year round. Always keep your eyes open for new ways to share love with others.

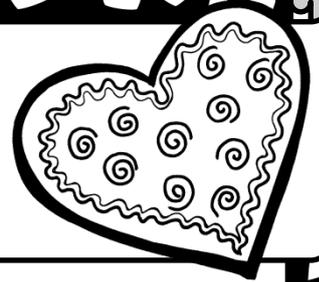
You may wish to begin with your family. Whether your family is big or small, take a moment to show love. Perhaps you will complete a chore without being asked, or you will offer to help with a task you normally hate. Maybe you will make a card to thank your family members for all they do for you.

Next, share love with your community. Many people are struggling during this Christmas season. You may wish to take steps to help others. Perhaps you could raise money for the Salvation Army, or maybe you could buy a gift for a family in need.

It is important to remember that God calls on us to love EVERYONE – even our enemies! In the story, “An Unexpected Friend,” Greg discovers that he is able to make things right by showing kindness to the boy who is not being kind to him. It is never easy to be kind to those who drive us crazy, but we are called to love our enemies. Make an extra effort to be kind to those people you do not always like – your kindness will be an unexpected surprise!



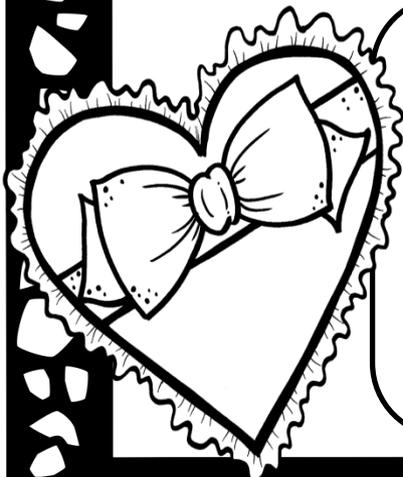
# I Can Show Love!



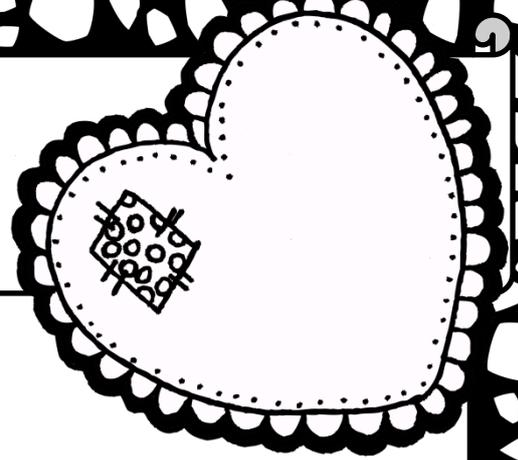
In the box below, draw some ways that you can show love.

A large, empty rounded rectangle intended for a child to draw various ways to show love.

Chose one way that you can show love.  
Write about it in the space provided  
below.

A rectangular box containing six horizontal lines for writing a description of the chosen way to show love.

# Love Poem



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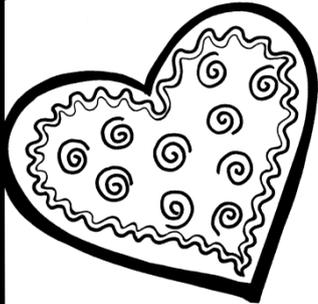
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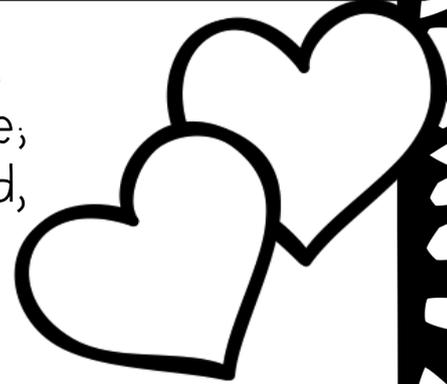
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# Prepare Your Heart



Advent is a time to prepare;  
As Christmas comes into scope;  
We remember the Christ Child,  
Who long ago brought **Hope**.



The world knew very well,  
This child's love would never cease.  
For God had sent his Son to earth;  
So that we may know **Peace**.

The world rejoiced aloud,  
At the birth of this baby boy.  
Who could of known a tiny child,  
Would bring the world such **Joy**?



Each soul was full of delight  
For the child who came from above.  
The Christ Child had finally arrived,  
And with him, he brought **Love**!

So during this Advent season  
Be sure to do your part.  
Our Savior is coming soon,  
You must prepare your heart!





# Advent Poem



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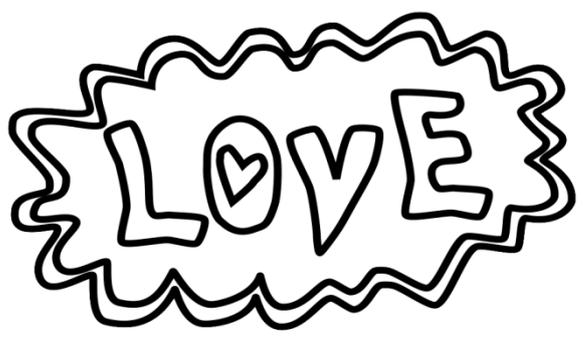
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# Advent Word Search

Advent Joy wreath Mary  
Hope Love candles Emmanuel  
Peace prepare Jesus angel

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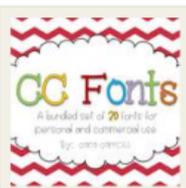
# Christmas Day



Christmas has arrived! Our wait has come to an end! We now light the final candle on our wreath – the Christ candle. Before Christ, our world was in darkness. Now, our world is full of light and hope! Advent ends on this day, and our Christmas season begins. Let us rejoice – for our Savior, Jesus Christ, is born on this day!

# Acknowledgements

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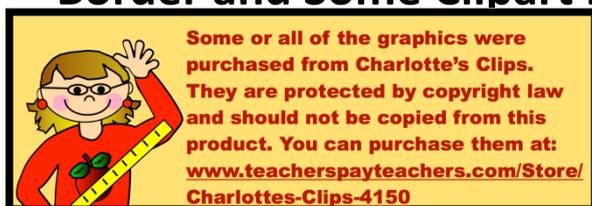


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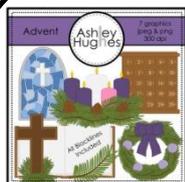
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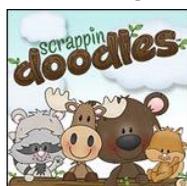
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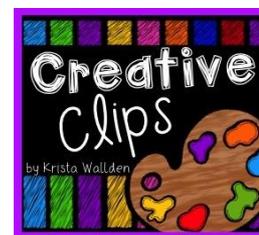
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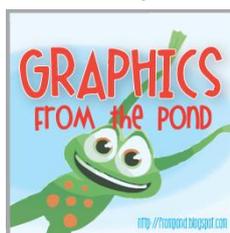
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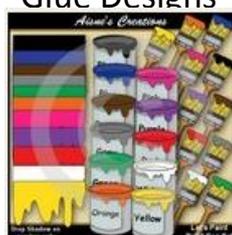
Monster Wrangler Mike



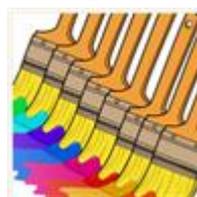
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