

ADVENT

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

We designed this devotional as a way to help you think about Advent themes during the entire month. There is one devotional reading for each Sunday of Advent. Choose a specific time each Sunday when you will do the devotion, and try to be consistent from week to week.



If using this devotion with an Advent Wreath, light the appropriate candles before beginning the specific devotion. One way to engage your kids is to light the candle and say what it represents as you light it. For example, if you are beginning Week 3 you might say, “The first week we talked about the coming of Jesus and Hope [light Hope candle], last week we talked about the coming of Jesus and Love [light Love candle]. After the devotional blow the candles out or let your kids have fun doing it.

Each devotion contains a passage of Scripture, a brief reflection on that passage, sample prayers to guide the

prayers of children and adults, and hymns to sing together to give voice to your praises and longings. We’ve chosen these Christmas hymns to correspond with the devotion’s theme, but feel free to sing a song more familiar to your family. Songs can be streamed directly from Clear Creek’s Advent webpage so you can sing along with your family.

Each weekly devotional also contains an illustration that can be colored by the children before or after you do the devotion. You may want to display these or send them to friends and family as a way to remember and celebrate the Advent season.

We have also included readings from a various assortment of children’s Bibles (e.g., *The Jesus Storybook Bible*). Identify the one your kids have and then use it for the devotions.

We hope this Advent Devotional might become a new Christmas tradition that helps your family remember that this holiday season is ultimately about the Good News that Christ the King came to rescue and redeem us back to God.

HOPE



HOPE

SCRIPTURE TO READ

Luke 1:26-38

OPTIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE READINGS (pick one)

My First Hands On Bible
pp. 208-213

Jesus Storybook Bible
"Get Ready!" pp. 170-175

Gospel Story Bible
pp. 158-159

Big Picture Story Bible
pp. 229-241

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

That's the start of the Christmas story.

God created a beautiful world, full of life and love and happiness. The first people in the whole universe, Adam and Eve, were friends with God. But then evil entered the world, and everything was broken. Satan, the enemy of God, introduced sin (or disobedience to God) to Adam and Eve, and God's beautiful world was broken, like a mirror being shattered into hundreds of little pieces.

But, that wasn't the end of the story; it was only the beginning. God had a plan to fix what was broken and he promised that he would. He said he would send someone to make things right.

Years went by and people were waiting for God's promise to come true. They waited a long time, so God told a man named Isaiah to remind everyone that he would keep his promise. Isaiah said, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel [which means "God with us"]," (Isaiah 7:14). So, everyone kept waiting.

This is where the story picks up for us today. An angel appeared to Mary and said, "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."

God was keeping his promise! He was sending the one who would make things right – a baby named Jesus. Jesus was the one Isaiah was talking about – Immanuel. God with us.

So, the coming of Jesus isn't just a fun story to tell at Christmas time. Christmas reminds us that God keeps his promises. God always does all that he has promised. God kept his biggest promise: he has come to be with us!

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

On this first week of Advent, we light the candle of **HOPE**, mindful of the hope that the One born in Bethlehem brings to the world.



In the advent of Christ we find **HOPE**.
[Light the Hope candle]

PRAYER

CHILDREN'S PRAYER | Dear God, thank you for always keeping your promises. Help me to believe in you and trust you. Help me to be like you by keeping my promises.

ADULT'S PRAYER | Father you are always faithful and true. Thank you for your faithfulness. Help us trust you and place our hope in you. Help us remember that you are with us and you are everything we need.

SING TOGETHER: “O Come O Come Immanuel”

Sing along with the CCCC recording at
WWW.CLEARCREEKRESOURCES.ORG/ADVENT

O come, O come, Immanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Dayspring from on high
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadow put to flight.

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

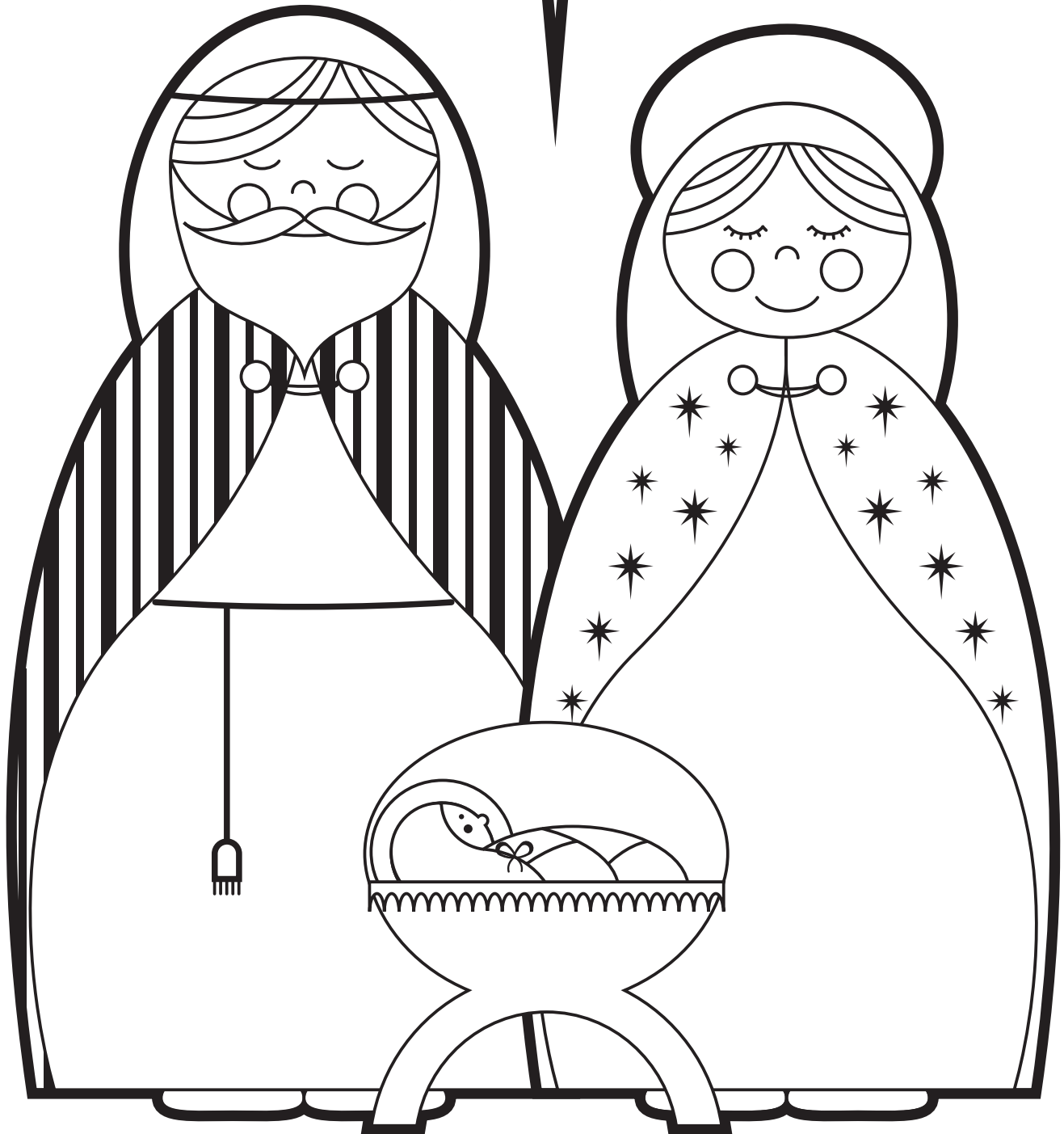
O come, Desire of nations, bind.
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!



LOVE



LOVE

Last week we lit the HOPE candle as we remembered the hope we have in Advent. (Light HOPE candle)

SCRIPTURE TO READ

Matthew 1:18-25 & Luke 2:1-7

OPTIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE READINGS (pick one)

My First Hands On Bible
pp. 214-221

Jesus Storybook Bible
"He's Here!" pp. 176-183

Gospel Story Bible
pp. 160-161

Big Picture Story Bible
pp. 243-257

God tells us that he loves us. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life," (John 3:16). That is amazing! But what does God mean when he says he loves us?

You might really like something, like ice cream, because it makes you happy. Is that how God loves us? You might like the way someone makes you feel because they are nice to you. Is that how God loves us?

The Bible describes God's love in a variety of ways, but it is very clear that God's love is never-ending and better than we can even imagine.

God's love is different than what we might think of as love. God doesn't love us because of how good we are or because we are nice to him. God loves us because he decided he wants to. The Bible says that God loved us "while we were still sinners." God decided he would love us even when we didn't love him.

You see, you can say you love someone over and over and

over again. You can tell everyone you see that you love someone. But do you really love them if you only say you do? No one knows.

God didn't just say he loves us. He proved it by what he did. He sent his Son, Jesus, to the world to rescue us.

So when Isaiah said "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel [or "God with us"]," (Isaiah 7:14) and then an angel appeared to Joseph saying it was time for this thing to happen, God was showing his love to all his people. He wasn't just saying he loved us, he was doing something about it.

The birth of Jesus is so important because it reminds that God is with us, he always keeps his promises, and he loves us more than we could ever know.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Today we light the candle of **LOVE**, mindful of the love displayed for us as Jesus left Heaven to come to Earth and to give his life for the people he loves.



In the advent of Christ we find **LOVE**.
[Light the Hope candle]

PRAYER

CHILDREN'S PRAYER | Jesus, thank you for loving us so much that you came to Earth to rescue us. Help me to love others the way you do.

ADULT'S PRAYER | Father, thank you for sending your Son Jesus into the world to save us. Forgive us for when we are unloving toward other people and teach us to love others in a way that brings honor to you. Help us share your extravagant love with our unchurched friends and neighbors this Christmas season. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen

SING TOGETHER: “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

Sing along with the CCCC recording at
WWW.CLEARCREEKRESOURCES.ORG/ADVENT

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the new born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”

Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the’ angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”



JOY



JOY

The first week of Advent we lit the HOPE candle as we remembered the hope we have in Advent. Last week we lit the LOVE candle as we focused on the love we find in the coming of Christ. (Light the HOPE and LOVE candles)

SCRIPTURE TO READ

Matthew 2:1-12

OPTIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE READINGS (pick one)

My First Hands On Bible
pp. 226-231

Jesus Storybook Bible
"The King of All Kings," pp. 192-199

Gospel Story Bible
pp. 160-161

Big Picture Story Bible
pp. 229-241

God is in the business of unexpected victories. When it looks like there is no way he could possibly win, those are the moments God gets to show us who he really is.

So, when no one had heard from God for hundreds of years, and then suddenly Jesus – Immanuel, God with us – was born, the angels rejoiced! The shepherds went to the stable to see if it could possibly be true. And the wise men saw a star in the sky and traveled to Bethlehem to worship the new king.

God is here! He is with us! Everything is going to be okay!

Jesus, the hero, had entered the story.

A lot of bad stuff had happened before Jesus was born. Life was hard. But people had joy because of what God had promised them. They were excited that he was going to save them. And then when it happened, they got to celebrate even more. Jesus – the Savior, the King, the Messiah – had finally come.

But later, when Jesus died on the cross, it looked like bad things were happening again. Everyone was stunned. The hero was dead. It looked like there was no way God could possibly win.

But then, God did the impossible. Jesus walked out of the tomb. He was alive. The hero had won!

And then, he made another promise that he would come back again and set everything right.

So even on the scariest days, when there appears to be no way to win, we can look to the hero of this grand story and find joy. We can find joy in the beauty he's put into the world and in the way he is still doing impossible things in people's lives. And, we can have joy now, because as followers of Jesus, we already know how the story ends.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE



Today we light the candle of **JOY**, mindful of the joy the One born in Bethlehem brings to any and all who will believe in him as Savior and King.

In the advent of Christ we find **JOY**.
[Light the pink Joy candle]

PRAYER

CHILDREN'S PRAYER | Jesus, thank you for being the Good King. Thank you for protecting us and providing for us. Help me to worship you with joy.

ADULT'S PRAYER | Father, thank you for being the Good King. Help us live as obedient citizens in your kingdom. May we find joy in worshiping you and may we joyfully offer our gifts and treasures to you.

SING TOGETHER: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Sing along with the CCCC recording at
WWW.CLEARCREEKRESOURCES.ORG/ADVENT

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

REFRAIN

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav’nly song?

REFRAIN

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

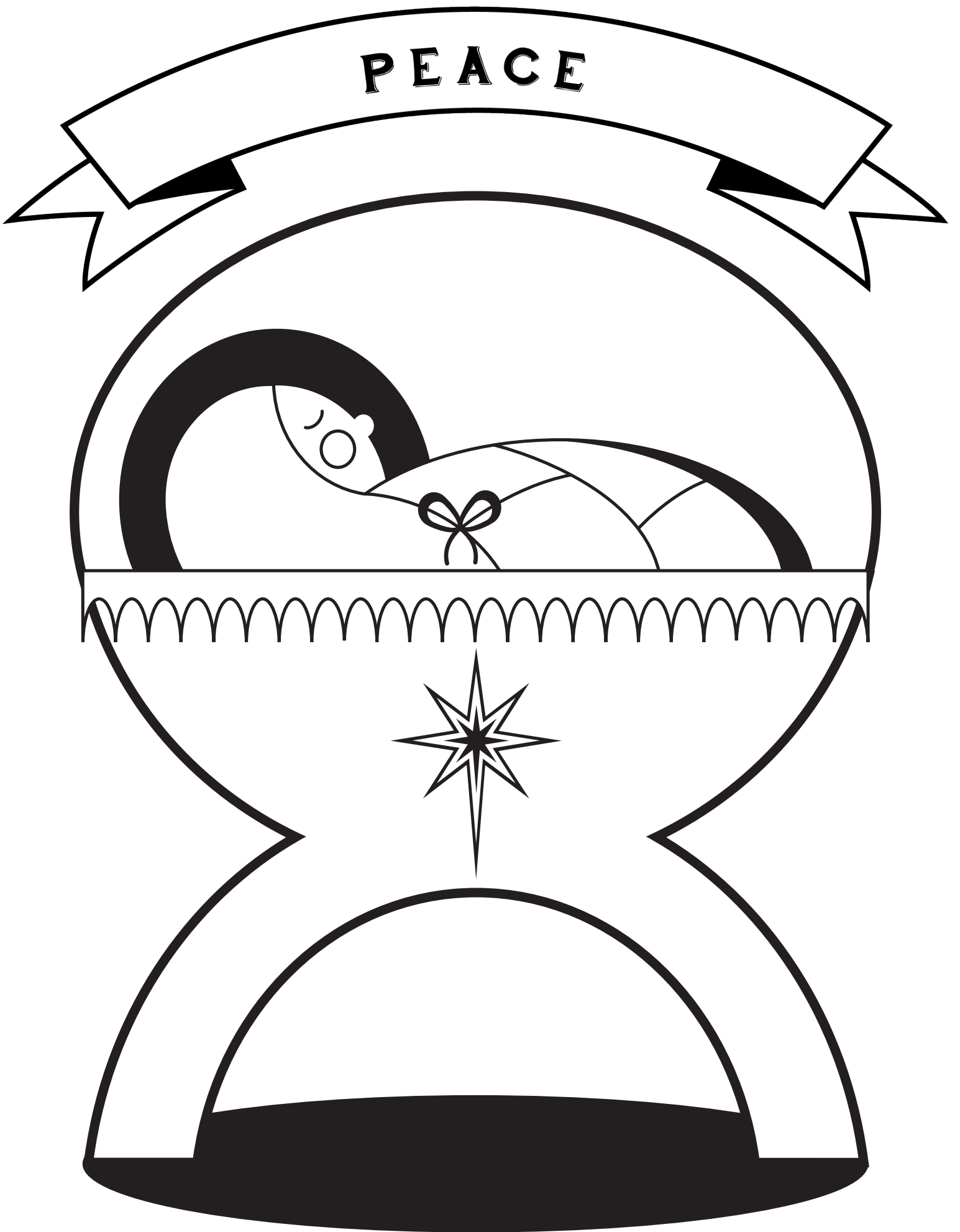
Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

REFRAIN

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!



PEACE



PEACE

The first week of Advent we lit the HOPE candle as we remembered the hope we have in Advent. The second week we lit the LOVE candle as we focused on the love we find in the coming of Christ. Last week we lit the JOY candle as we celebrated the joy of the one born in Bethlehem brings to any and all who will believe in him as Savior and King. (Light the HOPE, LOVE, and JOY candles)

SCRIPTURE TO READ

Luke 2:8-21

OPTIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE READINGS (pick one)

My First Hands On Bible
pp. 222-225

Jesus Storybook Bible
"The Light of the Whole World," pp. 184-191

Gospel Story Bible
pp. 160-161

Big Picture Story Bible
pp. 259-269

God's messenger, Isaiah, said Jesus was going to be the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

We think of peace as being a time where there is no fighting and everyone's happy. But we know that doesn't happen very often. We learn in history class about all kinds of wars. We hear about all sorts of bad things on the news. So, how can Jesus be the "Prince of Peace"?

Well, it helps to think about what the Bible means when it talks about peace. When the Bible talks about peace, a lot of times it's not talking about fighting, it's talking about the idea of something being whole or complete, like a puzzle with all the pieces put in place, or a perfectly built wall with no cracks. Peace means something is perfect.

And here's the really wonderful thing about the story of Jesus Christ: he *is* the Prince of Peace. Jesus puts things back together. He can fix what has been broken. He does heal the hurting. He's always done that, and he always will.

At the beginning of the story, sin entered the world, and we said it was like a mirror being shattered. But as followers of Jesus, we know the Prince of Peace is going to put all those broken pieces back together. Jesus – Immanuel, "God with us" – is going to fix everything, and we will get to be with him forever.

That's why Christmas is about more than just a baby born on a peaceful night; it's about a baby born to bring about a peace-filled eternity.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Today we light the candle of **PEACE**, mindful of the peace that Jesus not only established between us and God, but the peace he will one day bring to all creation in his Second Coming.



In the advent of Christ we find **PEACE**.
[Light the Peace candle]

PRAYER

CHILDREN'S PRAYER | Jesus, thank you for coming to the world to bring peace. Please help me to be peaceful with my family and friends.

ADULT'S PRAYER | Father, thank you for your peace. We are so grateful that you have made peace with us in Christ. We pray your peace would extend through us to our community – that you would make peace where there are broken relationships. Bring peace to our friends and neighbors who have yet to come to know you. We pray that the world will receive you as the great King and give you honor and glory.

SING TOGETHER: “Silent Night”

Sing along with the CCCC recording at
WWW.CLEARCREEKRESOURCES.ORG/ADVENT

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God love’s pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth
Jesus, Lord at thy birth

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia”
Christ the Savior is born
Christ the Savior is born!



CHRIST

Today is a day of celebration—the Advent of Christ! The first week of Advent we lit the HOPE candle as we remembered the hope we have in the coming of Christ. The second week we lit the LOVE candle as we focused on the love we find in Advent. The third week we lit the JOY candle as we celebrated the joy the One born in Bethlehem brings to any and all who will believe in him as Savior and King. Last week we lit the PEACE candle grateful for the peace that Jesus the Christ brings to the world. (Light the HOPE, LOVE, JOY and PEACE candles)

SCRIPTURE TO READ

John1:1-17

OPTIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE READINGS

Jesus Storybook Bible

“Heaven Breaks Through,” pp. 200-207

Merry Christmas! Today we celebrate the birth of the Messiah, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, the Prince of Peace, the Savior of the world, the hero of the story, Jesus Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life,” (John 3:16).

That is something worth celebrating! So today, as we celebrate Christmas, let's remember why this day is so important.

Remember the hope we have in Jesus – that he keeps his promises. He does exactly what he says he is going to do!

Remember the love we have in Jesus – how he doesn't just say he loves us, but backs it up with his actions, saving us from our sins even when we don't deserve it.

Remember the joy we have with Jesus who does the impossible even when it seems like there is no way to win.

And remember the peace we have in Jesus, the healing he brings for our hearts and will bring for the world – the way he puts the pieces back together.

Sometimes this world can feel dark and scary. But Christmas reminds us that Jesus came to shine light in the darkness. So we eat good food, we give each other

presents, we give hugs, we sing songs, and we tell the story again to keep the light shining.

Jesus has come! God is with us!

Merry Christmas!

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Today we join with the angels in heaven, the shepherds in the fields, the wise men from the east, and the millions of faithful followers across the globe to come and adore him—Christ the Lord—the light of the world.



On this Christmas day, we light the **CHRIST** candle on the Advent Wreath acknowledging that Jesus is our perfect fulfillment of **HOPE**. He is our perfect example of **LOVE**. He is our perfect pathway to real **JOY**. And he is our only hope for true **PEACE**.

In the advent of Christ we find Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. [Light the Christ candle]

PRAYER

CHILDREN'S PRAYER | Jesus, thank you for forgiving us and for coming to save us. Help me to tell my friends how much you love us.

ADULT'S PRAYER | Father, we know we do not deserve the gift of your love and forgiveness, but you give freely. May we receive it with thankfulness and affection for you. Thank you for your mercy and the glorious gift of your grace. Help us live in a way that celebrates your goodness and shines your light to the world.

SING TOGETHER: “Joy to the World”

Sing along with the CCCC recording at
WWW.CLEARCREEKRESOURCES.ORG/ADVENT

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heav'n and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

