

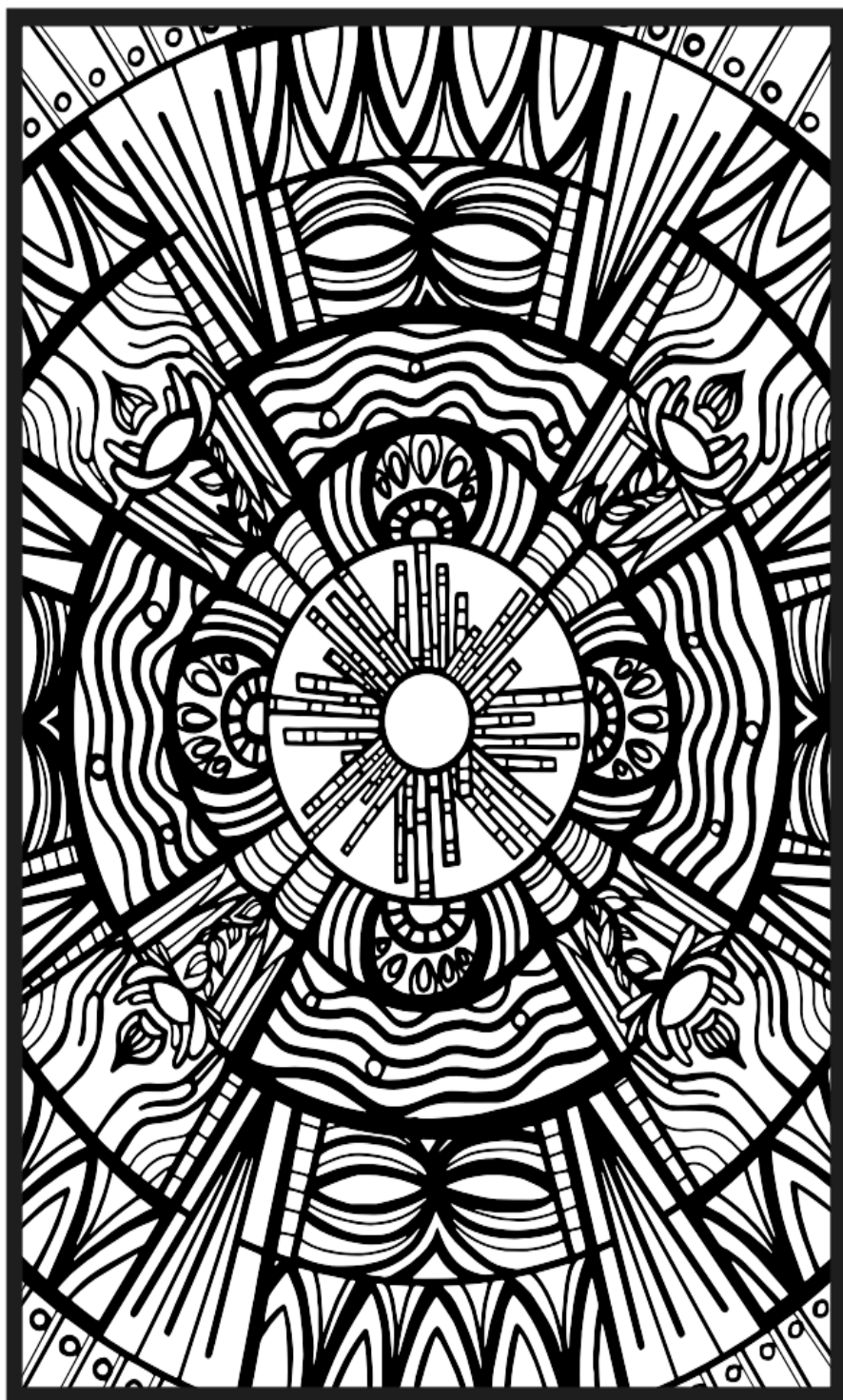


# ADVENT

*what are we waiting for?*

2024  
Advent Devotional





This world is full of beginnings—a baby's first cries, the light of sunrise, new habits formed, love singing your name, and hope breaking into our day-to-day. However, before a new beginning, there is always waiting. This Advent, we wait for the birth of the Messiah—our unfailing light. We'll seek a love that pushes against the shadows of night. We'll follow a star and trust it to show us the way. We'll proclaim that God has the power to make us new each day.

We hope this devotional might awaken you to this daily promise of newness. Each day, we invite you to carve out time with your family to wonder, pray, and explore your way through this season. In a world where light often seems dim, we encourage you to see the world through the lens of hope, naming where God's light shines and how you are working to share that light more abundantly. As you walk through this Advent season, may you find the light that shines all around us.

This Advent, let there be darkness. Let there be peace. Let there be new beginnings. Let there be light—as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.

★ Where is light missing in the world?

★ Where is light breaking in?

Pray: May the light shine in the darkness, for even darkness cannot overcome it. Amen.

★ How have you seen or felt light?

★ How have you shared light with others?

Pray: Arise, shine, for our light has come. The radiance of God has risen upon us. Amen.

# The First Week of Advent - Hope

## The Morning of December 1

John 1:1-5

“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn’t extinguish the light.”

Today I'm grateful for:

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Prayers

Prayers

Prayers

Where I see Light:

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What is the night sky like where you live?

- ★ Are you in or near a city, where the streetlights and building lights compete with the starlight? Are you out in the country, where the deep, velvety black of the sky is dotted by more tiny white lights than you can count?
- ★ Have you ever gone to a place different than where you usually are, looked up into the night sky, and been amazed by how many—or how few—stars you could see, just based on that change of setting?

We often use competitive language around ideas of light and darkness, maybe assuming that since they're opposites, they must be at odds. This is the common idea that light and darkness are in competition. Understanding that "the light shines in the darkness" but the darkness does not overcome the light is not always our first thought.

The darkness not overcoming the light doesn't have to mean the light wins. Instead, it could mean there's not a fight to be had. Like stars in a night sky, the light and the darkness coexist, each helping create space for and define the other. They are part of the same world. They make each other visible and knowable. Without that dark sky, how would we see the stars shine? Without their shining, how could we guess at the scope of the sky?

About a hundred years ago, the Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke, probably looking up at a starry sky, wrote, "the dark embraces everything: shapes and shadows, creatures and me, people, nations— just as they are. It lets me imagine a great presence stirring beside me."

The darkness invites our imagination to play. The darkness is what existed with God, that great presence stirring, at the beginning of creation. Darkness is the canvas onto which the whole world came into being. It's what welcomed the waters, the land, the sky, every living thing...and first of all, before anything else, the light. The

darkness holds all that is each night in an embrace as the light fades and the world falls into rest again.

Instead of a birth story for Jesus, like given in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the Gospel of John gives us this: a call back to the very beginning of our faith's story, to that initial darkness that "covers the face of the deep" and to the light that comes when God speaks it into being. This light, a light that exists before the sun or the stars, is the first thing God calls "good." (Genesis 1:1-4)

The Gospel of John draws us back to the beginning of God's big story, as if to say: remember how world-changing the light was? Remember how it shaped all that could be?

Through Jesus, the world sees the return of God's light. Light makes it possible for us to see and navigate the world around us, to know ourselves and each other, to play, work, learn, and discover. Nothing is the same once we know the gift of light. This is true for Jesus, the Word Made Flesh, too! Nothing was or ever will be the same after him. Everything good is possible because of him.

This Advent, consider these ideas from Genesis and John: "the darkness" is what is, and "the light" is what comes. We are rooted in the first; we await the second. Our lives find meaning through them both.

### WONDERING

- ★ Go outside. What time of day is it? What do you see, hear, taste, feel, and smell? Is there light? Is there darkness?
- ★ When have you trusted on light shining in the darkness?
- ★ Close your eyes. What do you see? What can you imagine in the darkness?
- ★ Open your eyes. What do you see now? What can you imagine in the light?
- ★ Do you think of light and dark as competing with each other? Why or why not?
- ★ How can darkness be a place of possibility?

## PRAYER

God of Light and Dark, this week may we not be afraid of the light or darkness. May we go into the world, see the places where your light and darkness are both good. May we find hope in the sunrise and comfort in the sunset. May we remember the hope of Christ lives in us. Amen.

## **The Evening of December 1**

Spend some time reflecting on this morning's scripture: John 1:1-5.

John begins his gospel with metaphors of "word" and "light" to describe Jesus. Jesus is the "Word of God" and the "light of all people," which the darkness cannot extinguish. A metaphor describes one thing by comparing it to another. John isn't saying Jesus is literal light, but John uses the imagery of light to describe the impact Jesus has. People often thought that meant Jesus got rid of the darkness. But actually, the darkness is still present. Jesus works in the midst of both dark and light. Dark and light coexist together.

Long before Jesus was born, the Hebrew prophets also used light as a symbol of hope. In chapter 9, the prophet Isaiah says, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned." The light dawning in a land overwhelmed with darkness is a symbol of hope in God's promises.

## WONDERING

As you color the shadow box pages and **make your shadow box theater**, ponder these questions:

- ★ What do you feel when you think about light? What about darkness?
- ★ What are some good and helpful things about light? What are some good and helpful things about darkness?
- ★ Name some good gifts of darkness.

## ACTIVITY

Gather your Advent candles and light them in a well-lit room, maybe on the kitchen table. Light the first candle. Today we light the candle of Hope, because hope has come to us.

- ★ What do you see? What do you notice? Do you see any shadows? How much light do the candles add to the room?
- ★ Now take a moment and turn off any electric lighting. Darken the room with blinds or curtains. What do you see now? What do you notice about the candlelight? Do you see shadows now? How does the darkness help you appreciate the candles differently? In what ways does the darkness feel pleasant or gentle? In what ways can darkness help us understand our world better?

As you color today's calendar square, think of the places where hope is sprouting in the world around you.

## PRAYER

Loving God, Your spirit surrounds us in both light and darkness. Like sunlight, you help us find our way and explore our world. Like a dark night sky, you give us rest from all the worries of the day. May we be light for people who need to see hope in this world. May we be cozy darkness for those who need a safe place to rest in your love. Amen.



## **December 2**

WONDER: How did people see their food before the invention of lightbulbs?

ACTIVITY: Enjoy a meal together or an evening snack by candlelight.

- ★ What do you notice about using candles instead of electricity?
- ★ Why do you think people enjoy eating by candlelight?

As you color today's calendar square, think of the places where a single flame of light, like the small light of a candle, would make a big difference in sharing God's hope with others.

PRAYER: God of hope, you make your love known to us in ways both big and small. Like the flame of a candle, your love is both simple and extravagant. Help us to be bearers of hope, shining brightly in the world for others to see. Amen.

## **December 3**

WONDER: When it is dark outside, lights and sparkles remind us to celebrate. Does your family use Christmas lights to light up your home or Christmas tree? What about glitter or tinsel?

ACTIVITY: How many sparkly, reflective, shimmery, or flashing things can you find in your home? Set a timer for three minutes and see who can find the most LIGHT!

As you color today's calendar square, look at the lights shining or twinkling around you. Think about how these lights remind you of the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World, this Advent season.

PRAYER: Giver of Light, as we decorate our homes with festive cheer, we remember that the light of Christ brings hope to the world. May each shimmering bulb we see this season be a reminder of your love for us. Amen.

## December 4

WONDER: Have you ever stayed up past your bedtime into the night? Why? What were you doing? Share the story with your family.

ACTIVITY: Most of the Christmas story takes place at night. God loves working at nighttime! Many creatures on earth thrive at night, as well. They are called nocturnal animals. Look up three nocturnal animals online or in books.

- ★ What features do they have in common?
- ★ What do they do in the nighttime? What do they do when the sun is out?

As you color today's calendar square, think about all the strange and wonderful gifts of God's creation.

PRAYER: Creator of All, as darkness comes and the day ends, we are reminded of the beauty and mystery of your good creation. In the stillness of night, we find hope in the lives of creatures that thrive in darkness. Grant us the courage to know that even in the darkest of nights, you are working within us. Amen.

## December 5

WONDER: Where in the world do you see God? How is God present in the world today?

Throughout the Bible, God shows up in different kinds of light: a burning bush, a flaming pillar, tongues of fire... God loves to glow in the dark! When Moses and the Israelites were wandering through the wilderness, God was present in a pillar of fire that guided them safely through the night and gave them light to see.

Lights are an essential part of nighttime safety for us, too. Lights help us know when to stop moving in traffic. They help us see where we are going so we don't crash into anyone or anything. They help

illuminate the streets and sidewalks so we can follow the path and be aware of our surroundings.

ACTIVITY: Walk outside your home or apartment and count how many safety lights you see.

- ★ What other lights do you see outside? What purpose do they serve?
- ★ Do you have any lights that keep you safe at home?

As you color today's calendar square, think of all the people, places, and ways God's light is at work in your life to keep you safe.

PRAYER: God With Us, we give thanks for the lights that guide and keep us safe in the dark night. Your presence is a refuge that protects us, leading the way through the cold shadows of our world and into your warm and loving embrace. Amen.

## **December 6**

WONDER: How does darkness make you feel? Are you afraid of the dark? Does darkness make you feel sad? Sleepy?

ACTIVITY: Some places on earth are dark for most of the day during the winter. You can find them on a map near the north and south poles. Take a few minutes to research time and season differences across the globe.

- ★ Where is it night right now? Where is it daylight?
- ★ Which people are experiencing long winters right now? How do they spend their dark days?

As you color today's calendar square, think of all the people in all the places around the world that see the same light from the stars and moon at night.

PRAYER: God, we know you are present in the darkness and in the light. Help us feel your presence even when we are in the dark. Amen.

## **December 7**

WONDER: How does darkness make you feel cozy? What else do you do to feel cozy?

ACTIVITY: Darkness feels cozy, especially with hot apple cider or hot chocolate. This is easy to make, and it has a wonderful aroma! Simmer some cider or chocolate on your stovetop and enjoy some together.

As you color today's calendar square, thank God for the items and the people that help you feel cozy.

### **Advent Event tonight at 6:30-8:00pm for free family fun!**

Join us in the West Parking lot as we celebrate the season with an illuminated Advent evening of fun, including activities to add light to the dark night. S'mores making and hot chocolate included. Rumor has it that there will be tree lighting, and Santa will even attend! We'll also collect hats, mittens, socks, and undies for our unsheltered friends.

This is a free family event, and all are welcome. Grown-ups stay with their children for a fun and engaging evening.

Prayer: God of comfort, thank you for the items that bring warmth and cozy feelings to us. Thank you for the people that help us feel warm and cozy. May we extend that warmth and coziness to those around us this season. Amen.

## **The Second Week of Advent – Peace**

### **The Morning of December 8**

Matthew 1:18-24, Luke 1:26-38

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary, his mother, was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
And they will call him, Emmanuel.

(Emmanuel means "God with us.")

When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife.


When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David, his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."


Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"


The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God’s Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled ‘unable to conceive’ is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God.”


Then Mary said, “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be with me just as you have said.” Then the angel left her.


Today I'm grateful for:


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Prayers


Prayers


Prayers


Where I see Light:

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Have you ever had a dream that seemed real?

Dreams feel real, some psychologists suggest, because they are real. Which is to say, our minds are always working on stuff. The questions we try to work out during the day—by talking about them with friends, making lists of pros and cons, or reading expert advice—those are the same questions our brains are still trying to work out at night, when we sleep. And they do that nighttime work in dreams.

Sometimes, the correlations between what fills our minds during the day and what takes up space in our imaginations at night are more obvious.

This is what the scripture tells us about Joseph: he had a question—what to do about Mary’s pregnancy?—and then he made a plan, and, “just when he had resolved to do this,” he was visited by the angel. That is, just when he’d worked it all out by the light of day, the dark of night brought him new insight.

But can we trust what happens in the dark? Joseph’s dream is wild. Mary being pregnant by the Holy Spirit, with a child that will save all people? That sounds, if not too good to be true, at least too strange... But Joseph trusts it. He wakes up and he acts on what he has learned from his dream. The nighttime gave him both new understanding of what was happening and new courage to act on that understanding. It’s almost as if, because a dark night, a dream, is a setting in which nothing can be fully known, it’s also a setting in which anything might be possible.

I wonder if Joseph trusts this wild possibility because he’s part of a tradition in which God speaks to people in dreams and visions, and says some pretty unbelievable things.

God tells Miriam and Aaron and Moses:

“Those of you who are called to be prophets know that I make myself known to you in visions; I speak to you in dreams.”

God takes Abraham out to look up at the night sky and promises him that his people will be countless, like those twinkling stars.

And maybe it helped that Mary also had a visitor, an angel who came to her and told her basically the same message: that her baby was from God, and that she need not be afraid.

Maybe the echoes between those two visits helped Mary and Joseph both to trust in the mysterious messages they received.  
Maybe knowing they had each other helped them know that what they had seen and heard was from God.  
And it was real.

### WONDERING

- ★ Have you ever had a dream that felt “real,” or that stayed with you even after you woke up? Tell that story.
- ★ How do you make the transition from night to day, from sleeping to waking? Are there certain rituals or activities you do? Share about what you do, and why.
- ★ What is your morning routine? The first thing you do when you wake up?
- ★ Have you ever had a dream, or vision, or voice you couldn't quite explain that has helped you with something you've struggled with?
- ★ Where in your life do you need to hear God's voice to not be afraid?

### PRAYER

God of Night and of Day, we find peace in you. We call upon your promise of peace today. Where there is war, let there be an end to the violence. Where there is anxiety, let there be serenity. Where there is fear, let there be an assurance of safety. Where there is darkness with no light, or light with no rest, may your peace abound in our hearts and minds. We find peace in your promise proclaimed so long ago, of your kingdom there will be no end.  
Amen.



## The Evening of December 8

Spend some time reflecting over this morning's scripture: Matthew 1:18b-24a, Luke 1:26b-38

Did you know that long ago, before there were phones, computers, or even compasses, sailors used stars at night to find their way? The stars, of course, were made of light, but the night enabled the sailors to see stars clearly enough to navigate their path. Light and dark worked together to illuminate the way.

This week's scriptures include two essential Advent stories leading up to Jesus' birth. In these stories, darkness plays an important and significant role. Night tells our bodies it's time to sleep, and sometimes, we can even have dreams.

In these stories, both Joseph and Mary have visions of angels who bring good news: Mary will give birth to God's own Son. This miraculous news was scary for Mary and Joseph. They couldn't see how everything would work out. Though we don't know when the angel visited Mary, scripture says the angel came to Joseph at night. Perhaps darkness can feel scary because we can't see what's there. However, darkness doesn't stop the angel from visiting, nor does it make the news any less good.

In both visits, the angels say not to be afraid. Their message offers peace, even as Mary and Joseph face an unexpected future. Like the night sky for ancient sailors, these holy visits to Mary and Joseph point the way when they don't know what to do. And we know, of course, their message is very good news.

### WONDERING

As you color and cut out the shadow box characters of the **City of Bethlehem, Mary, Joseph, and the angel**, ponder these questions:

- ★ Why do you think the angels told Mary and Joseph not to be afraid?
- ★ Have you ever gotten big news that was scary and exciting at the same time? What was it?
- ★ Have you ever had a dream that brought you comfort? What made it comforting?

## ACTIVITY

The angels delivered important messages to Mary and Joseph. Another word for angel is “messenger.” We can all be messengers of hope. How can your family deliver a message of good news today? Take a moment to think of someone who could use a message of love.

Then write a note, send a photo, draw a picture, or send a text to that person or family. Each person in your family can do it!

Grown-ups, take an extra moment and write a special message of encouragement to your children.

Light the second candle on your Advent Wreath and remember the peace that can be found in the dark, knowing that there is hope ever present in the light.

As you color today’s calendar square, think of the people that bring the message of peace into your life.

## PRAYER

Loving God,

Thank you for the messages of hope we see in our world every day.

You send us messages of love in the daytime when it is sunny, and in the nighttime when it is dark, and sometimes even in our dreams. Help us be messengers of hope to our neighbors and friends and family especially for those who feel lonely or discouraged.

Bless those who will receive our letters and texts and pictures, that they might know that they are loved.

Amen.

## December 9

WONDER: How many electric lights do you have? What do you use each one for? What would you do without these electric lights?

ACTIVITY: Some people do not have access to electricity, so it can be tough for children to do their homework after dark. UMCOR is an organization that provides solar lamps to families with children.

- ★ Visit UMCOR's website <https://umcmision.org/umcor/> to see ways that you might help families without access to light.
- ★ Solar power also helps families to provide for their basic needs such as cooking their food. UMCOR supports a number of initiatives to help provide solar ovens to families in need.

As you color today's calendar square, think about families who need light and solar power for everyday living.

PRAYER: God, you created light first and called it good. Thank you for the light and all it brings. May we be good stewards of the light and share it with others. Amen.

## December 10

WONDER: Do you do things differently when it is hard to see in the dark? Do you use your hands or feel your way around? What would it be like to not see at all, even when it was light outside?

ACTIVITY: Christmas is for everyone of every ability. Some people do not use light to see because their eyes do not register light. They have found other ways to navigate!

- ★ Research different ways people with visual impairments explore their world.
- ★ How do people with other abilities enjoy the Christmas season?
- ★ How can we be helpful to those who do not see with their eyes?

- ★ How can we celebrate in a way that includes people with other abilities?

As you color today's calendar square, think of people who might do things differently than you, and be thankful for them.

PRAYER: God of all senses, thank you for smells, and tastes, and sounds, and feelings of this season. May we use all of our senses today to experience and enjoy all that this season is. Amen.

## **December 11**

WONDER: Look at artwork around where you live. Where do you see light? Where do you see shadows?

ACTIVITY: Advent is a time of light and darkness. Both light and darkness are important parts of the season and also, of art! Light creates shadows. Light and shadows are essential to creating beautiful artwork.

- ★ Can you draw or paint something that has a shadow?
- ★ How do you make a shadow with a pencil?

As you color today's calendar square, think of light and of shadows, and about how both are important to give a complete picture.

PRAYER: God of light and of shadow, thank you for the complete picture. Thank you that both light and shadow live together in the same space. Amen.

## **December 12**

WONDER: How many things do you do in a hurry? How many things do you get frustrated by when they take too much time, or are done slowly? Try to do something that you usually do quickly, but do it very slowly today.

ACTIVITY: Advent is a time of waiting and slowing down to think about life. But we are usually busy in December!

- ★ Schedule a time during your day to do something slow.
- ★ Read a book, write in your journal, meditate, or play with playdough. But do it verrryyyy sloooowwwlllyyy.

As you color today's calendar square, color very slowly and think about how it feels to slow down.

PRAYER: God of the slow moments, may we slow down today and find you amidst all that we see and all that we do. May we be aware of your presence in the slowness. Amen.

## **December 13**

WONDER: Have you ever baked something? Does it feel like it takes forever in the oven to finish baking? Or does it take forever to cool down after you've baked it for it to finish cooling? What have you baked and had to wait to enjoy?

ACTIVITY: When we are waiting for something good, time feels like it passes very slowly. But great things can happen over time! Take a look at some time-lapse photography online. Watch snow melt, plants grow, or life decay.

- ★ Do you have a smartphone with a time-lapse function? Set it up in a sunny window for a half hour or more.
- ★ What do you notice from the footage?

As you color today's calendar square, think about perspective and how often it feels as if things are moving slowly, but in reality things are happening at just the right time.

PRAYER: God of time, thank you for slow time, and for fast time, and for time in between. Thank you that things happen at just the right time. Amen.

## **December 14**

WONDER: Without dark, what would we lose? What would we miss?

ACTIVITY: This season of winter and of Advent are times of slowing down and waiting. The cold and the dark allow us to slow down in certain ways.

- ★ List ways in which the darkness of winter blesses our lives.
- ★ Thank God for both the darkness and light that we need to survive.

As you color today's calendar square, think of what the darkness gives to your life.

PRAYER: God of dark, thank you for the slow ways that darkness allows us to be still and snuggle in. Thank you for this season of waiting. Amen.

## **The Third Week of Advent – Joy**

### **The Morning of December 15**

Luke 2:2-14

This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

Today I'm grateful for:

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Prayers

Prayers

Prayers

Where I see Light:

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Sometimes the skies surprise us. Maybe a fluffy white cloud, looking convincingly like a dinosaur, drifts across a blue sky. Maybe a shooting star flashes across a still dark night, leaving a trail of light lasting only long enough for us to remember we can make a wish, then disappearing before we've been able to think of what we should wish for.

During the solar eclipse we listened for animal sounds, because we'd heard animals follow the cues from natural light, or darkness.



Sure enough, when the moon passed in front of the sun for that brief time and the world grew dark, things got quiet—as though the animal kingdom was bedding down—and when the sun began to reappear barely minutes later, the birdsong and the squirrel rustling around started back up again, too!

There are things we expect from the natural world; patterns our minds and bodies grow accustomed to, and when those expectations are unmet—or challenged—it can delight us, confound us, or sometimes even terrify us. That’s what happened to the shepherds. They were out in their fields, under a vast night sky, one they’d looked up into thousands of nights before this one.

The darkness probably carried a predictable comfort for them: their eyes knew the movements of the constellations in the sky above them; their feet had worn paths in the ground beneath them; maybe some nights brought a chilly breeze or a wandering stranger but most nights seemed a whole lot like the ones before them—until this night. On this night, light pierced the darkness—“the glory of the Lord shone around them”—and it terrified them. It was unexpected; it was unnerving; it was intense. And they became the next ones to receive the message now forming our Advent refrain—“Do not be afraid.” All the characters with major roles in this story are visited at some point and told not to be afraid. Joseph heard it in his dream; Mary heard it in her vision. Now the shepherds hear it out in their fields.

For those of us familiar with this story, the frequency with which this refrain, “do not be afraid,” is repeated is an invitation to wonder: is this a scary story? Like, if I didn’t know that this was going to end well, would I be trembling throughout, like all the characters seem to be? And every time the angels tell their listeners not to be afraid, the accompanying message is the same: things are not what they seem. Joseph worries Mary’s pregnancy is a sign of her unfaithfulness to him; the angel tells him it’s a sign of her blessing from God. Mary fears the angel’s presence, uncertain why she’d be visited by God’s messenger and imagining it to be nothing good; the angel reassures her it’s a sign of favor, of God’s delight in her.

The shepherds cower when the light floods their field that night; they’re quickly reassured this intrusion is a friendly one, that the angel brings “good news of great joy!” And the angel announces not so far

away, under that same dark sky, a baby was born who would be the Savior—a baby who would one day, we know from other stories, come to be called the Light of the World; a Savior whose love, like Rilke’s “dark” in the poem from Week One, embraces everything.

“Things are not what they seem” is news that can be comforting or unsettling, wonderful or terrible, depending, of course, on how things seem. But in a world where we’ve come to so easily associate light and dark with good and bad, it can be important to remind ourselves God shows up in everything: the dark night cradles the baby Jesus; the light piercing it displays God’s glory; the shepherds are invited to witness all of it. Good news is all around.

### WONDERING

- ★ Is the story of Jesus’ birth a scary story?
- ★ Has darkness ever been a predictable comfort for you? How so?
- ★ Imagine you were among the shepherds in the field this night. What would you have been thinking or feeling—first at the burst of light, then at the angel’s announcement, then at the invitation to go and find this baby?
- ★ Would you have been trying to convince your friends to follow this good news, or would you have needed to be convinced yourself?
- ★ When has something not met your expectations and delighted you? Confounded you? Terrified you? How have you known God’s presence in that?

### PRAYER

God-with-us in light and darkness, we worship you with joyful praise because your story is still unfolding. The same good news that inspired shepherds to run to Bethlehem continues to animate your people today. We have not seen the end of your glory, and we have not stretched the limits of your mercy. We rejoice in anticipation, believing your work is not done in us, through us, and around us.

We join with the angels, singing in praise and gratitude:

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!” Amen.

## The Evening of December 15

Spend some time reflecting over this morning's scripture: Luke 2:2-14

Have you ever stepped out of a dark place, like a movie theater, into the sunshine? Were you overwhelmed by the light? In the darkness, our eyes adjust, so sudden bright light can momentarily hurt. Between our phones, tablets, night lights, and city lights, we don't spend much time in darkness. Sometimes we spend so much time looking at lit-up screens it can harm us.

In Jesus' time, there were no screens or even electricity. The night was very dark and not always safe. But the shepherds who watched over their sheep at night learned to see and be comfortable in the dark. Imagine how overwhelming it was for them when a very bright heavenly light suddenly appeared! At first, the shepherds are terrified. But like many other divine encounters, the angel says, "Don't be afraid." They bring news of great joy – a Savior has been born! Jesus' message of love and hope is sometimes very different from the messages of our world. Choosing to act boldly with kindness and grace can be uncomfortable, even as we know Jesus calls us to love. It can also feel hard and take some adjusting, just like suddenly seeing in bright light. But this is what brings true joy.

### WONDERING

As you color and cut out the shadow box character page of **the shepherds, sheep, and angels**, ponder these questions:

- ★ Do you think you would be overwhelmed and afraid if you were suddenly encountered with a heavenly light like these shepherds? Why or why not?
- ★ What does it feel like when you're suddenly faced with a very intense, bright light? How do you respond?
- ★ Tell of a time when you chose to act with kindness and grace, even though it felt uncomfortable or even a little bit scary.

### ACTIVITY

"Do not be afraid!"

Angels like to say that. But it isn't very easy to be brave, is it? Sometimes it helps to think about your fears in a silly way. Take some playdough and mold it into the shape of something of which you are afraid. Is it a shark? A monster? A worm?

Now, let's get a little bit silly.

Place your playdough fear in front of you and talk to it. That's right. Talk to it. Tell your fear what you think of it. You might say, "Shark, you are a very important sea creature, and I am glad you exist. I know you probably won't hurt me. Especially when I'm on land."

How does that feel? What might your fear say back? Maybe a shark would say, "I don't want to hurt you! I am more interested in yummy fish."

Look around at the other creations your family made. What else is your family afraid of? Are your grown-ups fearful of anything? How do you talk together about your fears? How does it feel to talk to and listen to your fear? Do you think differently about your fear now? How so?

Light the third candle on your Advent Wreath, the pink candle of Joy. We remember that the waiting shepherds were met with good news of great joy – a message of hope and love and peace – and that we are met with that same message to go and share with others.

As you color today's calendar square, think about those things you are afraid of and let them go.

### PRAYER

Gracious God,

You are with us when we are afraid.

And you are with us when we feel brave.

Thank you for giving us strength and courage to face new challenges and fears together.

And thank you for giving us each other.

Help us to love and protect one another when we feel afraid. Amen.

## December 16

WONDER: What is the phase of the moon tonight? How does it reflect the light? Is it a sliver, or half, or whole, or almost hard to see? Is it covered by clouds or big and bright?

ACTIVITY: Jesus is the light of the Christmas story. Jesus brings hope and love to everyone who encounters him. He lights up the world! Our solar system has many planets and moons, but only one source of light.

- ★ What is that source of light? How big is it? How hot is it?
- ★ Are there other lights like ours? How many?
- ★ Learn about the lights that help us survive.
- ★ What do those lights have in common with Jesus?

As you color today's calendar square, think about the moon and how it reflects the light nightly.

PRAYER: God of all creation, the dark and the light, may we be reflectors of your light and love to all of those around us. Amen.

## December 17

WONDER: What are some songs that you only listen to during this season? Do you listen to them as soon as Halloween is over or do you wait until after Thanksgiving? Do you stop listening to them as soon as Christmas Day arrives?

ACTIVITY: Did you know one side of the moon is always in darkness, and one side is always in the light? The moon does not have seasons, but the earth does! We have the joy of changing seasons.

- ★ In this season, what are your favorite family traditions? What are your favorite movies? What are your favorite songs to sing?
- ★ Listen to your favorite songs of the season, and if your family likes to sing, sing along!

As you color today's calendar square, listen to some of your favorite Christmas music and give thanks.

PRAYER: God of changing seasons, thank you for this season of waiting and lights and treats and songs. May we enjoy all the little things that this season brings! Amen.

## **December 18**

WONDER: Have you ever been to some place where you could look up into the night sky and see it filled with stars? Have you ever wondered how many stars there were in the sky? How many stars can you count in the sky tonight?

ACTIVITY: When shepherds watch over their sheep at night, they become very familiar with the stars in the sky. If you connect the dots of stars in the sky, you can find shapes – shapes that do not change. These shapes are called constellations.

- ★ Can you see stars in the sky over your home?
- ★ What shapes do you see?
- ★ Does your grown-up recognize any famous constellations? Do you?

As you color today's calendar square, think about all of the other people who have looked up at the same stars that you can see and be thankful that we are all connected.

PRAYER: God of the stars, thank you for the light of stars. Thank you for the generations of people who have loved you and looked at the same stars in the sky. We are all connected. Amen.

## **December 19**

WONDER: Do you look like anyone in your family? Do you have traits or characteristics of someone else that is in your family?

ACTIVITY: Have you ever heard we are made from stardust? What does that mean?

- ★ Find out how you are a beautiful mass of stardust.
- ★ Thank God for taking such great care to create us from dust.

As you color today's calendar square, think about those that share characteristics with you and be thankful for your connection.

PRAYER: God of creation, thank you for creating us and calling us very good. May we see you in all that you've created and called good. Amen.

## **December 20**

WONDER: What is your strongest sense? Do you hear things really well? Or taste things very strongly? Do you have a sense that isn't as strong as the others? How do your other senses compensate for that?

ACTIVITY: Sight is just one way we take in the beauty of Christmas.

- ★ We see twinkling lights, we smell baking cookies, we taste apple cider...what else?
- ★ Talk about the senses we share and thank God for our abilities to sense the world around us through sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.

As you color today's calendar square, think about all the things around you that you can see, hear, taste, smell and touch.

PRAYER: Thank you God, for all of the ways we sense the world around us. May we be ever mindful of the ways you draw us closer to you and to others. Amen.

## **December 21**

WONDER: Look at all of the light around you at this moment. How many different colors of light are there? Shades of white or yellow?

Colored bulbs? Or shades of sunlight? How many different colors can you see at one time?

ACTIVITY: Jesus called himself the “light of the world.”

- ★ In what ways was Jesus a “light” when he lived on earth?
- ★ In what ways is Jesus a “light” now?
- ★ Create a word cloud of your ideas.

As you color today’s calendar square, think of the ways that light brings color to the world around us.

PRAYER: God of light, thank you for sending your Son to be light here for us and to show the way of love. May we be light and love to those we are near. Amen.



## The Fourth Week of Advent – Love

### The Morning of December 22

Luke 2:15-20

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened. Let’s confirm what the Lord has revealed to us.” They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

Today I'm grateful for:

★ \_\_\_\_\_

★ \_\_\_\_\_

★ \_\_\_\_\_

★ \_\_\_\_\_

Prayers

Prayers

Prayers

Where I see Light:

★ \_\_\_\_\_

★ \_\_\_\_\_

★ \_\_\_\_\_

In a small town at the beach in North Carolina—and probably in other places, too—there’s a rule about porch lights. Actually, the rule is: no porch lights. For those people lucky enough to live or vacation with the Atlantic Ocean as their backyard, this is the deal they make with their surroundings—to not introduce artificial light at night. This means if they want to go walking on the beach at midnight, they have to find their way by moonlight. Sometimes, when walking there at night, there are brief glimpses of ghost crabs scurrying away from approaching footfall, and there is wondering about what else it is we’re not seeing, what’s hidden where the moonbeams aren’t falling...

The rule exists to protect sea turtles who come ashore to lay eggs and find their way back to their watery home by the light of the moon. When other lights are introduced into their environment, the turtles can become confused, disoriented, lost, and find themselves in danger, dehydrated, and far from the waves they’d thought they were heading towards.

Wonder about the shepherds, making their way towards Bethlehem after the angel’s invitation. How disoriented might they have been—by the light that broke through their sleepy night sky, by the vision of angels before them, by the announcement God was bringing good news and they were invited to be a part of it?

Did the darkness seem even deeper when the light withdrew?

Did they rub their eyes with their fists when the angels disappeared?

Did circles of light remain in their vision after the encounter with the angels, like what happens if you accidentally look at the sun and then look away?

Whatever adjustments it took, the shepherds fared better than turtles do after a new light is introduced into their night sky. The shepherds don’t have any trouble making up their mind to travel across the dark land; they seem to make their way through it, and to the Light the angels had proclaimed, quickly and easily.

Which makes us wonder: were the night-shift shepherds the first ones invited to visit because they were used to darkness and could traverse it confidently? Their eyes were trained for that environment; they trusted the world at night and themselves in it.

Barbara Brown Taylor, in *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, writes about her first experience exploring a cave that hadn't been outfitted with lights for tourists. She thought about the cave's natural dwellers: bears who come to hibernate and give birth, bats and frogs who come for the cooler temperatures, raccoons and skunks who come to duck in, out of harsh weather. But why were she and her friend there? Why do people choose to make their way through darkness?

"That's harder to say," she admits. "We come to see what is here and to discover who we are in the presence of what we find."

Could that have been what the shepherds were after, too? Night after night under that wide sky, they probably had a sense of perspective, of how they fit in the world. But when the angels come with their news—and call it good, and say that it's for everyone—it's an invitation to set out and see what is there, and to discover who they are in the presence of what they find.

And this is about more than just the shepherds. When they arrive, they tell Mary and Joseph and the baby all that the angels told them. Then the shepherds leave, rejoicing. They've become carriers, bearers of God's good news, and witnesses to it.

Mary stays, pondering.

She's been a bearer of that news in her own way, and now she's a recipient of others' rejoicing over it. Everyone becomes someone new through this encounter, birthed in the darkness, proclaimed in the light.

### WONDERING

- ★ What do you think the shepherds talked about on their way to Bethlehem? What might they have been wondering about, or looking forward to, or fearful of?
- ★ What are the emotions you carry when you set out on a journey?
- ★ Have you ever gone somewhere—just down the street or far from home—that gave you new perspective on who you are? Tell about it.
- ★ How is Jesus' birth "good news" for the shepherds? How is it "good news" for everyone?

- ★ This Advent, how are you being invited to explore, to discover, to proclaim, to rejoice?

### PRAYER

God of loving kindness, what love you have shown us that we may be called your children— each of us created in your likeness, yet expressing your character in infinite diversity.

You love us, all of us, even the parts of us we struggle to love, even the people we struggle to love, even the people groups we struggle to love. And when we wonder how to love each other or ourselves, you have given us Love Incarnate, Jesus Christ, to show the way. And it is in Jesus we see the true act of love. May it be so among us today.

Amen.

### **The Evening of December 22**

Spend some time reflecting over this morning's scripture: Luke 2:15-20

If you live in the northern hemisphere, Christmas means winter, cooler temperatures, shorter days, and longer nights. The shortest day and longest night of the year—the winter solstice— falls just a few days before we celebrate Jesus' birth. We are eager and ready to connect Jesus' birth to the return of light and warmth!

But in the southern hemisphere, Christmas falls during summer, just a few days after the longest day and shortest night of the year. In Australia, some people have pool parties on Christmas day! Though Christmas is full of light, it also starts a season of shorter days and longer nights. Jesus' coming is still good news, no matter where you are! The Gospel is about inclusive, unconditional love.

After the shepherds encountered the angels in bright light, they were suddenly left in darkness again. To find the newborn baby, Jesus, they readjusted from the sudden bright light to begin their journey in the dark. Of course, they're not the same shepherds as they were before the angels came to them. Now they know about Jesus, and they are on a journey toward him. That doesn't change the fact that it's dark,

but it does change what they do in that darkness and how they travel through it: with hope and wonder.

Our world doesn't always feel hopeful or love-filled. On Christmas, we celebrate the hope and love Jesus continues to bring to our hurt and pain. Still, even as we adjust to the world again after the celebrations of Christmas, following Jesus changes how we live and the way we move through the world. Because of Jesus, we try to show love and have hope in a world needing both.

### WONDERING

As you color and cut out the shadow box character page of **the shrubs and stars**, ponder these questions:

- ★ If Christmas falls during winter where you live, how would you celebrate it if it was during summer instead? If it falls during summer where you live, how would you celebrate during winter?
- ★ What happens when you first go from a well lit place into darkness? What happens to your eyes so you can see even without a light?
- ★ What are some hard things about the world today? How does Jesus teach us to respond to those hard things?

### ACTIVITY

All over the world, people are participating in the season of Advent, looking forward to Christmas Day. Some places celebrate Christmas with sunshine and hot weather. Some places celebrate Christmas with snow and cooler temperatures. For our unsheltered friends, they are subject to the elements at all times, even during this season of Advent.

We are collecting socks, underwear, hats, and mittens for our unsheltered friends. They can be placed under the tree in the Children's Check In Area. Our hope is that they will provide much needed warmth and comfort during this season.

Light the fourth candle on your Advent Wreath, the candle of love, which reminds us that when all else fails, when hope seems lost, when the night seems eternal, love remains. And love wins. As you color today's calendar square, think of those that don't have a permanent place to call home, that they might be safe, well-nourished, and joyful this Christmas season.

### PRAYER

God, thank you for our unsheltered friends. You love them very much, and you care about their needs. Today we pray they might be safe, have the food and supplies they need, and find joy during this Advent season. Guide our work and our hands as we seek to connect with them and love them well. Amen.

### **December 23**

WONDER: Words can bring light. And words can bring darkness. What words do you love to hear said? What words bring light into your life? What words do you speak that bring light into others' lives?

ACTIVITY: In a few days, we will all exchange moments of love and joy with each other as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

- ★ Take some time to write down something you love about each person in your family and tuck it away to share on Christmas Day.
- ★ When we share kind words, we share the brilliance of light and the cozy warmth of darkness.

As you color today's calendar square, think of words that bring light into the darkness.

PRAYER: God of light, thank you for words of affirmation and love. Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. May we say words of love and light out loud to those around us. Amen.

## **December 24**

We invite you to attend Christmas Eve service today and prepare your hearts for Christmas Day.

Join us for one of our Christmas Eve services at First United Methodist Church of Arlington:

- ★ 3:00pm Family Service
- ★ 5:00pm Traditional Sanctuary Service
- ★ 7:00pm Traditional Sanctuary Service
- ★ 11:00pm Testament Choir Led Service

## **Christmas Eve**

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word  
and the Word was with God  
and the Word was God.

The Word was with God in the beginning.  
Everything came into being through the Word,  
and without the Word  
nothing came into being.

What came into being  
through the Word was life,  
and the life was the light for all people.

The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

Every year, the end of the Christmas Eve worship service reminds us of the power of light shining in darkness, and darkness not overcoming it. After the congregation hears the scriptures recounting Jesus' birth and sings the carols celebrating it, we switch the lights off. All we see are the flickering candles of the Advent wreath, five small points of dancing flame in an otherwise dark sanctuary. As the familiar chords of "Silent Night" begin, one person takes the light from the center candle, the Christ candle, and carries it to the congregation.

Each person receives the light from the person next to them, until, maybe somewhere near the end of the third verse, somewhere near the "dawn of redeeming grace," tiny lights are flickering throughout the

room, and a sea of faces swims in a soft glow, each one illuminated by their own small flame.

It's still dark. But eyes and mouths, tears and smiles, are visible.

The darkness continues to hold the mystery and awe of the story we proclaim at Christmas—that God comes, in love, to dwell with and among us, to learn from and with us what it means to be human, to teach us what it means to be God's people.

And the light creates spaces in which each of us can be seen and known. Looking at the faces around us, held by the darkness, shining in the light, we can see how holy each one is.

I think back to that first Christmas. Barbara Brown Taylor tells us Jesus was born in a cave—maybe not the way we usually imagine a stable, but “caves made the best stables in Jesus' day—no wind whistling through the boards, no predators sneaking up on you from behind.”

It makes me wonder: Did Mary also labor in that dark cave—a womb, of sorts—and bring forth her baby in that protected space? Was Joseph beside her? Could she see him? Did Joseph cradle the little boy in his arms, carry him out into the crisp air and moonlight, to get a first glimpse of his face?

Or had they brought a small oil lamp on their journey? Could they see each other by it, the way we see each other's candlelit faces in a darkened sanctuary on Christmas Eve? How visible were Mary and Joseph's exhaustion and elation to each other?

Did the wonder and terror in their eyes—the same in any new parent's eyes—shine in that darkness?

What did they see when they first saw the face of Jesus?

And what do we see when we turn out the lights, or step out into the night, or close our eyes? What do we feel when left with just ourselves, our stories, and the hopes and fears of all the years? Maybe it's easy for our fears to come rushing back to us in the darkness.

So much around us tries to convince us darkness itself is something to be afraid of—ideas of good and evil, right and wrong, safety and danger, are all conflated with light and dark imagery and language.



Heaven is drawn as a place of light; the earth as a place of darkness. Our spirits are imagined as light; our bodies as darkness. Villains in our stories do their work at night; heroes in the daytime. Those depictions can lead us to neglect the earth, to vilify our bodies, to fear the descending night and the people that populate it. Sometimes our fears are legitimate; sometimes they can serve to protect us. But sometimes they're a response to conditioning, intentional or not, and letting this imagery go unexamined and unchallenged can have profound and harmful consequences for all of us.

The creation accounts, the songs of the Psalms, and especially the story of Jesus' birth invite us into a holy, imaginative, redemptive, glorious darkness—just the right setting to hold the shining light, just the right manger to cradle the Light of the World.

Darkness and light are not opposites; they exist in relationship to one another, each finding its definition through the other. The story of God coming among us draws together light and darkness in one holy scene. The Christmas story invites us to rethink everything we thought we knew, presenting both the ancient grounding of the dark and the coming revelation of the light as places where God can be known. This Christmas, which of the gifts offered by darkness and light will you receive? Which will you share?

### WONDERING

- ★ How are light and darkness part of your Christmas celebrations?
- ★ What questions do you have about the first Christmas?
- ★ Have you ever experienced a moment that felt “holy”? How did light and/or darkness factor into that experience?
- ★ In what ways has “light” meant “good” and “darkness” meant “bad” in your experience? In what ways have those associations shaped your understanding?
- ★ How have you challenged them, or how might you?
- ★ What are the hopes and fears you bring to this Christmas, or this season of your life? How might spending time with those—held in the clarity of light or the comfort of darkness—be a gift to your spirit?

As you color today's calendar square, think about that first Christmas night and how the light flooded the sky in the quiet of the night.

### PRAYER

God-with-us on this long, dark night,  
just as Mary felt the pains of anticipation,  
just as the shepherds felt the breathlessness of excitement,  
just as the wise ones from the east felt the exhaustion of a long  
journey, we enter this story seeking the miracle—the incarnation of the  
Son of God.

We tiptoe into the quiet realm of new birth, looking for redemption,  
looking for deliverance.

The time will come when we shout your triumph,  
but for now we listen and we feel the pulse of the Christ Child,  
beckoning us into hope, peace, joy, and love.

Open our hearts and minds to his call.

Amen.

### **Christmas**

#### **The Light has Entered the World**

Scripture: Luke 2:1-7 & John 1:1-5

Merry Christmas! We have been waiting with eager anticipation for today. We journeyed with Mary, and Joseph, and the shepherds, and heard the angels announce the good news that Jesus was born.

Jesus is often described as “the light of all people” coming into the world. The day has finally arrived when we celebrate Jesus' coming into the world.

In Jesus, God comes into the world as a human being to be with us. Jesus is both human and divine. Those two things coexist in him, just like light and dark. John tells us darkness does not overcome the light. The darkness is there alongside the light as it shines. Darkness helps light stand out, just like the stars shining in the night sky.

There are good things about both light and darkness. In fact, we need both of them. Light helps us see, and darkness tells our body when it's time to rest. The cycle between them is how we mark time. If it's entirely dark and there's no light, it can be hard to see and become

unsafe. If it's too bright, that can also make it hard to see. Not to mention too much sun can hurt our eyes and even our skin. Light and dark are most useful to us when they are in balance and work together. After we enjoy the last bit of Christmas celebrations, we will enter into the coming season of either longer and brighter days, remembering Jesus comes into the world with love for all of us and all of creation. We can celebrate that Jesus sees the good in everything and everyone, including both light and darkness. Learning from his example, we can try to love everyone too and see the good in all things.

### WONDERING

As you color and cut the shadow box character of **baby Jesus**, ponder these questions:

- ★ Think about your Christmas celebrations and share how you saw light and darkness working together.
- ★ What other things coexist together?
- ★ What ways have you shown love this Advent season?

### ACTIVITY:

The story of Christmas occurs in light and darkness.

Take out your Christmas Shadow Box Theater and characters, use nativity characters you have in your home, or create your own set of paper characters. You will need Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, Baby Jesus, and a flashlight. Your flashlight is the spotlight!

Tell the story of Christmas together. You can read it from the Bible or use the included script.

Every time something happens in darkness, turn off the spotlight.

Every time something happens with light or in the light, turn on the spotlight. What did you notice? What did you discover about the story?

As you light the center candle on your Advent Wreath remember that Jesus came and showed us how to live, how to love each other, how to resist injustice, and how to be at peace within ourselves and with God. We celebrate Jesus today, and we celebrate this message

of Christmas, that hope, peace, joy and love may be found in light and darkness, because God's Spirit is already there.

As you color today's calendar square, think of the ways that light and dark allow us to see things differently, and be thankful.

PRAYER:

God of dark and light,

You created a world of light and darkness, and you called it all good.

You love dark and light colors and dark and light places.

Even your stories are full of darkness and light.

Thank you for showing us the beauty of our dark and light world.

Help us find glimpses of your glory everywhere we go.

Amen.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

JOIN US FOR  
*Christmas*  
**EVE**  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 2024  
Service Times:  
3pm, 5pm, 7pm, & 11pm

313 N CENTER ST.  
ARLINGTON, TX 76011  
817-274-2571