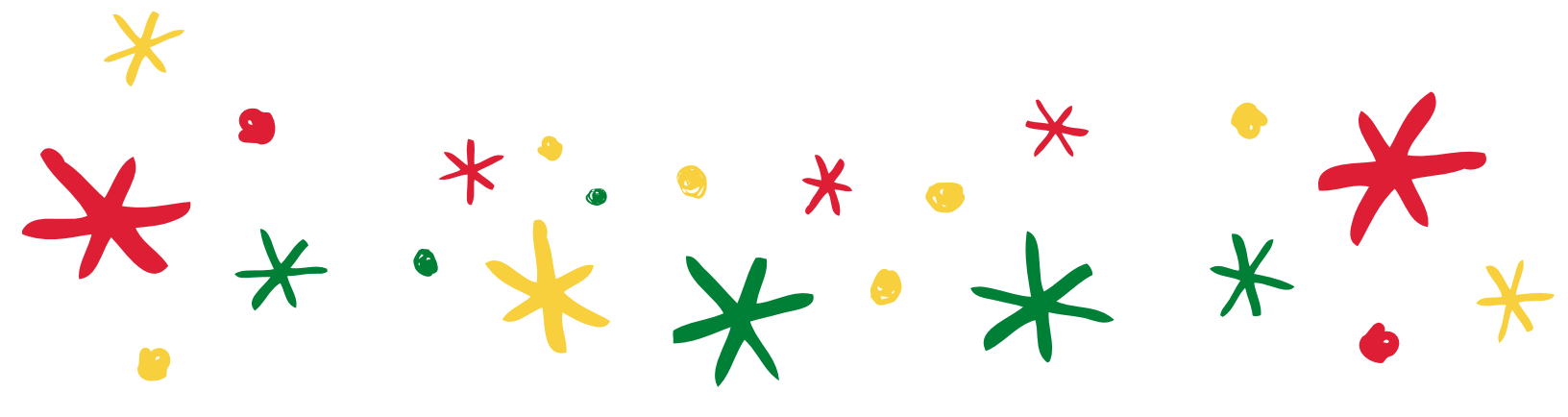




Family Advent Guide



About This Resource

Welcome to the Cokesbury Kids Advent Guide. We are so excited that you have chosen to make Advent a special time by helping your children experience the hope, love, peace, joy, and wonder of the season. Here is what you will find in this resource, along with some suggestions for using it:

Video Links

We have released 5 Advent videos from a variety of our resources, including Celebrate Wonder All Ages, Deep Blue Digital Bundles, and Cokesbury VBS, on our multimedia streaming platform Amplify. If you enjoy watching these videos, you can gain access to more Cokesbury Kids fun by signing up for an Amplify subscription, beginning with a free trial. Visit amplifymedia.com to get started.

Coloring Pages

Enjoy focusing on each Advent word by coloring these beautifully designed pages from our Celebrate Wonder curriculum. Also included is a printable Advent wreath you can color each week if you choose to not use real candles.

Activities & Prayers

Scripture passages, activities, and prayers are taken from Celebrate Wonder All Ages curriculum and Food Truck Party VBS.

Using this Guide as a Children's Leader

Permission is granted to distribute printed and electronic copies to the families in your ministry. You may also choose to use this resource or its components in a variety of ways in the programs you offer.

Using this Guide as a Parent

There is no one "right way" to use this resource at home! However, here are some tips to help you get started:

- Set aside time each week to light your Advent wreath or color your Advent wreath printout, read or watch the story, and spend time together.
- Encourage your children help lead the prayers and discussion.
- Don't feel like you need to have all the answers or follow this guide perfectly.
- Choose one or more activities to do each week of Advent. This can be done at the same time you light your wreath or at another time during the week.
- Document the memories you make, as well as your children's responses to the activities in this Advent guide, and save them as a special keepsake.



Week 1: Hope

What do you do to get ready for Christmas?
What does your family do to get ready?

Read Together:

Luke 1:5-25

Watch Together:

Elizabeth & Zechariah

<http://rebrand.ly/advent2021>

Experience Together:

- If you are using an Advent wreath, light or color the first candle.
- Discuss: What is something that you are hoping for this year? What makes you feel hopeful?
- Write your hopes down on small pieces of paper (help younger children by writing for them) and keep them in a special box or jar that you can revisit later.
- Write or draw messages of hope to give to your neighbors or people in your community.
- As a family, watch a "feel good" Christmas movie that makes you feel hopeful.
- Color the "Hope" coloring page.

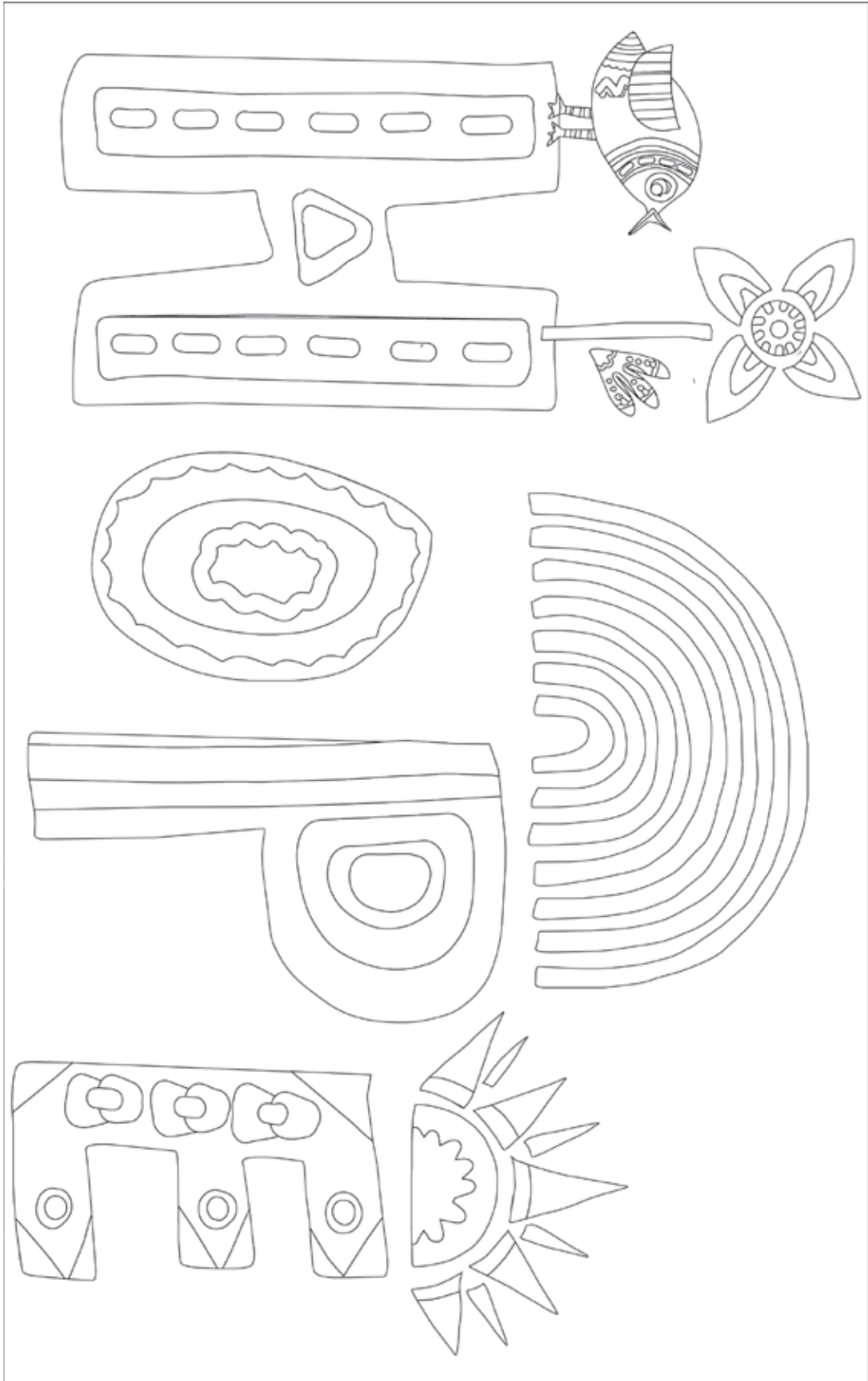
Pray Together:

Instructions: First, spend time silently praying for what you hope for this year. Then, say the following prayer together:

**We have four weeks to all prepare
Our hearts for Christmas fun.
But God will be there at the start,
And when Advent is done.**

**God fills our lives with hope and love,
But doesn't stop it there;
God always gives us extra so
We'll have enough to share.**

Amen.



Week 2: Love

What does it feel like to wait for something you really want?

Read Together:

Luke 1:26-38

Watch Together:

Gabriel's Message

<http://rebrand.ly/advent2021>

Experience Together:

- If you are using an Advent wreath, light or color the second candle.
- Discuss: If God sent an angel to you today, what do you think God's message to you would be?
- Call a friend or family member who lives far away and let them know you love them.
- Play Christmas charades! Write down words from the Bible story, or words that remind you of Advent. Take turns acting the words out and guessing.
- Bake cookies or another holiday treat together and share with the people you love.
- Color the "Love" coloring page.

Pray Together:

Instructions: Say the following call and response prayer together. Choose one person to be the leader, and others will respond with "Nothing is impossible for God."

Leader: **Lord, you take care of your people.**

All: Nothing is impossible for God.

Leader: **You comforted Mary when she was afraid.**

All: Nothing is impossible for God.

Leader: **You sent Jesus as a baby so we can know how much you love us.**

All: Nothing is impossible for God.

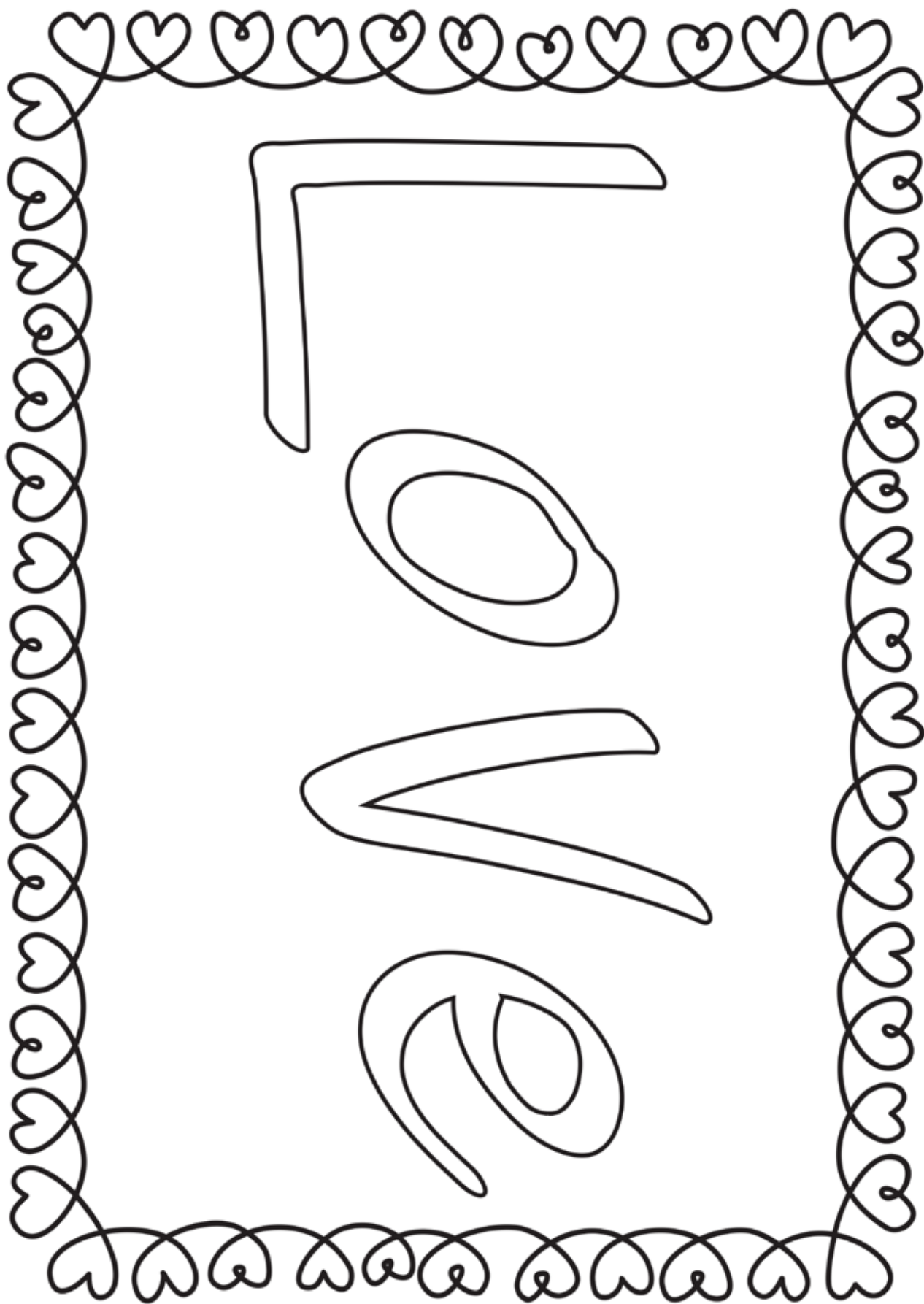
Leader: **You give us what we need for each day.**

All: Nothing is impossible for God.

Leader: **Help us to reach out and show love to the world because...**

All: Nothing is impossible for God.

Amen.



Week 3: Joy

Do you visit friends and family this time of year?
What is it like to visit and celebrate with those you love?

Read Together:

Luke 1:39-66

Watch Together:

Mary Visits Elizabeth

<http://rebrand.ly/advent2021>

Experience Together:

- If you are using an Advent wreath, light or color the third candle. This candle is often pink!
- Discuss: What is one thing that makes you feel joyful? How can you share your joy with others?
- Find a way to "jump for joy" by bouncing on a trampoline, playing hopscotch, or dancing to some joyful music. Be creative and come up with ways to move joyfully!
- Experience the joy of the season by taking a walk or drive to view Christmas lights and decorations.
- Color the "Joy" coloring page.

Pray Together:

Instructions: Say the following call and response prayer together. Choose one person to be the leader, and others will respond with "God is great, God is good."

Leader: **Warm, bright lights and merry things—**

All: God is great, God is good.

Leader: **It's so much fun, we want to sing!**

All: God is great, God is good.

Leader: **Baby Jesus, God with us—**

All: God is great, God is good.

Leader: **Preparing our hearts for Christmas.**

All: God is great, God is good.

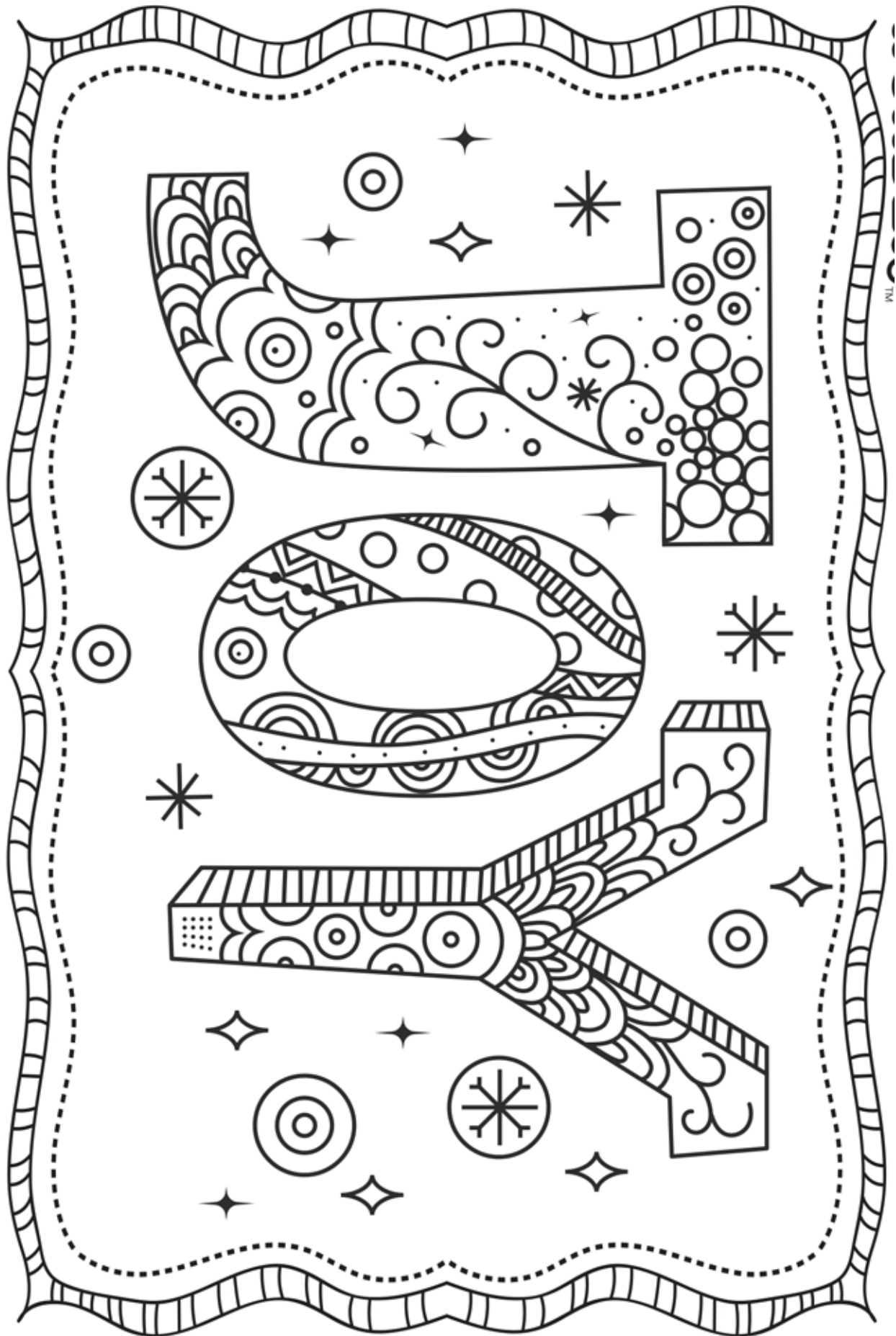
Leader: **Let us thank God for our food.**

All: God is great, God is good.

Leader: **Let us show our gratitude.**

All: God is great, God is good.

All: **Amen.**



Week 4: Peace

Do you have a Nativity at your house?
Have you seen a Nativity at church? What does it look like?
What do you notice about these Nativities?

Read Together:

Luke 2:1-7

Watch Together:

Mary's Journey to Bethlehem
<http://rebrand.ly/advent2021>

Experience Together:

- If you are using an Advent wreath, light or color the fourth candle.
- Discuss: How do you experience peace? Are there different kinds of peace? How can you share peace with others?
- Retell the story of Jesus' birth in a fun way. Use a Nativity set or assign parts to different people in your family. See if you can be creative and make costumes at home!
- Bring peace by helping someone in need this week.
- Take time to experience inner peace. You can go on a walk, try yoga, listen to music, or do anything that brings you peace.
- Color the "Peace" coloring page.

Pray Together:

Instructions: This is a body prayer to help us feel and remember that God loves us and that what God gives is always enough.

As you repeat each line of the prayer after me, try to do the motions as well.

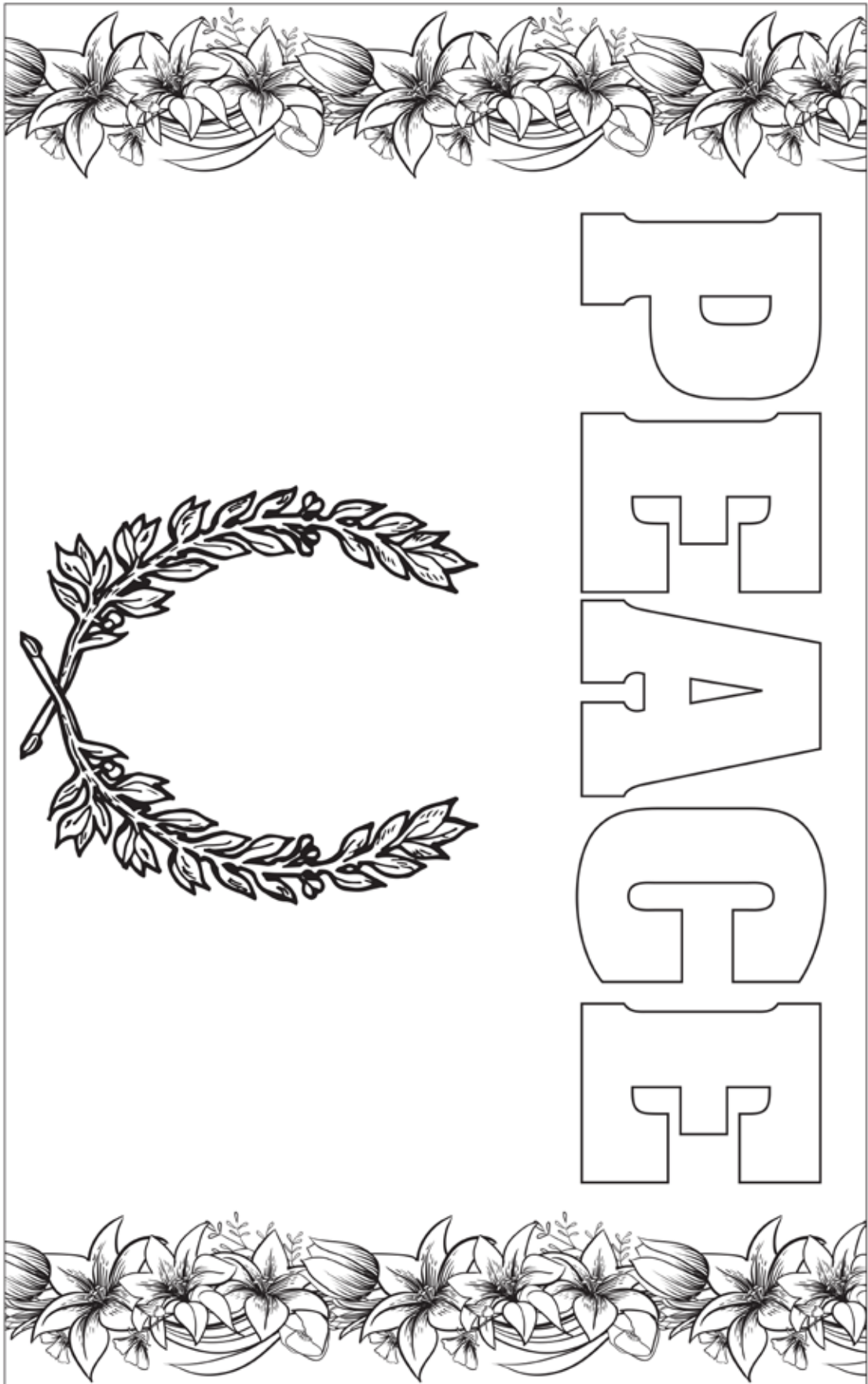
Your love is enough.
(Hands over heart)

Your peace is enough.
(Point to head)

Your blessings are enough.
(Hands out with palms facing up)

You are enough.
(Arms opened out wide)

Amen!
(Praying hands)



Christmas: Wonder

Why is Christmas such a special day?
What makes Christmas special to you?

Read Together:

Luke 2:8-20

Watch Together:

Emmanuel, God With Us

<http://rebrand.ly/advent2021>

Experience Together:

- If you are using an Advent Wreath, light or color the fifth candle, the Christ candle. This candle is usually large and white. All candles on your Advent wreath are now lit!
- Discuss: How do you think the shepherds felt when they saw and heard the angels?
- Share: What have you learned this Advent? What has been your favorite thing about Advent and why?
- Make plans to attend a Christmas Eve worship service together.

Pray Together:

Instructions: Use your imaginations and senses to celebrate the goodness of all of God's gifts to us. Pray intentionally with your eyes closed:

Oh God who is so good to us all, we give you thanks for all the beautiful things you've created for us to see. (Invite children to imagine something in nature that is beautiful to them: a tree, a stream, a bird flying overhead, etc.)

God of all goodness, we give you thanks for all of the amazing sounds you've created for us to hear. (Invite children to imagine sounds they like to hear: a favorite Christmas song, a parent or friend's voice, birds singing, etc.)

Good God who loves us, we give you thanks for a world full of great tastes and smells. (Invite children to imagine things they can taste and smell: fresh bread, honeysuckle, cookies, etc.)

Good and loving God, we celebrate our sense of touch. (Invite children to imagine with their sense of touch and think of things like: water running over your hand, petting a favorite cat or dog, the stem of a flower between your fingers, etc.)

God we thank you for all of the ways you share these gifts with us and all of the ways you've created for us to experience your goodness. Thank you for the gift of Jesus, the best and greatest gift of all.

All: Amen!

